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THE NATION

OCTOBER 22, 1977 *60 cents*

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'Claimsmen' & 'Traders'

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LETTERS

Bell and the agents

Washington, D.C.

I share Athan Theoharis's concern for the implications of Atty. Gen. Griffin Bell's decision not to prosecute former FBI Special Agent John Morley [editorial, "Bell Limits FBI Prosecution," *The Nation*, Sept. 10]. . . .

While Mr. Bell does indeed seem inclined toward limiting or terminating judicial review of FBI activities, outspoken advocacy of full FBI accountability can still convince the Justice Department to pursue its current investigations and to bring indictments whenever the evidence warrants prosecution.

During Mr. Bell's testimony before the House Subcommittee on Government Information and Individual Rights, I asked the Attorney General about his own position on alleged illegalities committed by FBI agents. Mr. Bell replied that domestic intelligence activities will not continue unless they involve investigation of a crime that has been or might be committed.

This unequivocal policy statement . . . provides a clear criterion against which present and future FBI activities can be judged. The subcommittee hearings and wide public condemnation of FBI break-ins clearly influenced Mr. Bell to disavow past policy sanctioning such actions and to state flatly that intelligence operations in this country can be carried out only when connected to a criminal investigation. . . .

Encouraged by this response to Congressional and public pressure, I urged Mr. Bell on August 16 not to let the statute of limitations terminate the current Justice Department investigations of a number of FBI officials. I asked Mr. Bell to furnish me with reasons for not prosecuting any pending case against an FBI official and to list the dates of expiration for each case under the statute of limitations. . . .

We shall see.

Ted Weiss, Member of Congress
20th District, N.Y.

the Harvard gang

Missoula, Mont.

The article by Ron Radosh on Schlesinger and Kennedy [*The Nation*, Aug. 6-13] is excellent! It helps drive home a truth which some of us have long suspected—that Prof. Arthur Schlesinger never has been "all that objective" as an historian.

By implication, Mr. Radosh has performed another service. It is to the effect that "the Harvard syndrome" has *not* necessarily been helpful to political life in the United States. The Ivy League advisers have constituted a "government within a government. . . ." Worst of all, they have posed as "liberals." They have consciously (and for reasons of prestige) lent their professional reputations to the support of programs which have proven reprehensible. With this latest report by Radosh, it becomes clear that from the times of Arthur Schlesinger to the more recent ones of Henry Kissinger, these great "liberals" have in fundamental ways supported American imperialism.

William H. Fisher, Professor
School of Education
University of Montana

what hope for Judge Johnson?

Huntsville, Ala.

Perhaps you are right [editorial, "Hope for the FBI," *The Nation*, Sept. 3] and the appointment of Judge Frank Johnson to head the FBI is a thoroughly good thing. I hope so. But my nose tells me that he is being "kicked upstairs" to get him out of the way. As a federal judge, he was in a position of real power, and was using it effectively. In the FBI this will no longer be true. *Arthur D. Penser*

EDITORIALS

Ditching the Panamanians

A self-respecting and independent people would reject the Panama Canal treaty recently signed by President Carter and General Torrijos of Panama. Does that judgment work for both countries or just for the Panamanians? We shall argue here that it should apply to both. It should not be necessary to differentiate our position from that of the imperialist firebrands like Reagan and Thurmond, but we will say at the outset that we agree with them—for entirely different reasons—only on the point that the treaty is bad for the United States.

As for the people of Panama, who go to the polls to vote the treaty up or down in a referendum on October 23, they must mark their ballots knowing that this instrument, bad as it is, is the best any government of theirs could get from any imaginable government of ours (assuming that the Senate will in the end ratify it, which is by no means certain). The Panamanians are therefore in the undignified position of having to vote on a treaty at a time when they cannot know if the government of the United States will be bound by its terms. Naturally they have to go first—after all, the U.S. population is 140 times theirs, and power, coupled with money, speaks loudly and also carries a big stick.

What they may get if enough of them vote "yes," as seems likely, is principally money. By the accords which constitute the treaty we will multiply the disgraceful $2.3 million a year we have been paying them for the use of the Canal by a factor of about twenty-five. On top of that goes some $345 million in economic and military aid over the next few years. They will also get U.S. recognition of Panama's "sovereignty" over the Canal Zone, though until noon on December 31, 1999 this country will keep control of the installations needed to operate the Canal.

What they do *not* get is the sovereign right to defend the Canal. That is to be done in concert with the United States and this fact severely limits the "sovereignty" ingeniously adumbrated in the treaty. It gives to the United States the "permanent right of intervention" if it should decide that the Canal is threatened.

"Intervention" is a word that casts appropriate fear in that part of the world, given this country's long record of moving in on the governments of Central America. (In Panama, then a restive part of Colombia, we intervened thirteen times between 1846 and 1903, to "restore order.") Therefore the word has caused waves there in the pre-referendum period and as the Senate begins its long hearings on the treaty.

Panama's chief of government, General Torrijos, told a French magazine the other day that his country had done much less well in the negotiations than he had expected, but called the result "the price my generation had to pay . . . to end the perpetual presence of the United States on a part of our territory." On the matter of intervention, he said that the right to it "has not been clearly defined by the texts and is therefore dangerous. I personally give it only a moral value. The future generations

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will have to guarantee the neutrality of the interoceanic Canal so as to avoid creating any flimsy excuse for intervention."

His chief negotiator on the treaty, Rómulo Escobar, recently said on television that Panama and the United States shared "the responsibility to keep the Canal open, secure and accessible. And each one has the right to defend the Canal." To which one might append the cynical question, "even against each other?" It takes little imagination to envision some internal development in Panama "threatening" a waterway which even the Pentagon has written off as both indefensible against determined sabotage and of slight military value.

Meanwhile, in the U.S. Senate, the hegemonic hawks are being placated from dawn to dusk. When the question of the right to intervene comes up in that forum, Secretary of State Vance and one of our chief negotiators, Sol Linowitz, remind the Senatorial patriots that, at the time of the ceremonial signing of the treaty, Torrijos declared that its effect would be to place Panama permanently "under the umbrella of the Pentagon." (As if it had not always been there or could ever escape that particular form of "protection.")

The Senate hearings on the treaty have been a show-business flop so far. The predicted pyrotechnics over the "giveaway" have done no more than sputter. The large hearing room in which they began was so embarrassingly empty that the scene was shifted to more modest quarters. Most of the time, a couple of Senators heard and dimly questioned the star witnesses. We are told that Senatorial mail is running overwhelmingly against ratification, but that is more a tribute to the efficiency of the mailing machines of the right wing's Viguerie, et al. than the reflection of a "patriotic" groundswell of genuine opinion. The anti-treaty reactionaries have tried a couple of shabby maneuvers in their efforts to stir up a storm, the most incredible of which was the attempt to prove that our negotiators were blackmailed into too favorable terms for Panama when it was revealed that our ever-alert intelligence operatives had been bugging the Panamanians to discover what were their negotiating limits. (That is said to have occurred in 1974, and who can doubt it when we did precisely that to the Micronesians during the time when Kissinger's people were talking with them about their future relations with the United States?)

The fact is that the treaty, for all the thirteen years of "negotiations" that supposedly went into it, reads as if it could have been written by a squad of American majors in a back room of the Pentagon right after the riots in the Zone which provoked Lyndon Johnson into starting the process. It contains a bit of face-saving for Panama wrapped up in dollar bills, but it leaves the U.S. position there virtually intact. No wonder that most of Latin America is unimpressed by its heralded "symbolism" of a new era in our relations with that continent.

In the best, or even second or third best, of all possible worlds, the United States would simply remove its patronizing presence from Panama and turn the operations of the Canal over to a consortium of American states in which we would be just one member. Such an organism does not, of course, exist, partly because we

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have not encouraged that kind of unity south of the border. So we are left to deal with the mini-state of Panama whose creation we (and they) owe to the catch-up imperialism of Theodore Roosevelt. The treaty we have worked out with that state gives it a token of self-respect without changing the fundamental relationship with us, and we have bought for belated cash a quarter-century more of tranquillity, or so our leaders hope.

It is reasonable to ask what would happen if the U.S. Government's enormous grandstand play, aimed at audiences at home and abroad, fails at last and the Senate rejects the treaty. We are told that guerrilla operations would break out in Panama, aimed at disabling the Canal, and that the rejection would be an intolerable affront to Latin American sensibilities, causing waves of violence all over the Southern Hemisphere. Perhaps that would indeed happen, though those who warn us of this consequence have a stake in the treaty as now written and therefore a reason to create such a bogey. It seems likely that the present treaty will in any case soon come to be seen as a continuation for another twenty-two years of the United States' insulting domination of Panama. The treaty is bad for the United States on both moral and practical grounds. Morally, this country will go on suffering the corrupting effects of exploitation, however disguised in the lawyerly language of the document. Two years after the ghastly end of the Indochinese adventure, we should not need reminding about the viciousness of illusions based on our supposed ability to have our way in the world. And practically, the longer we attempt to continue a neocolonialist system in Latin America, the more violent will be the explosion that ends it. The tightened screws of our "friends" among the dictatorial regimes down there show the rising pressures they must contain if they are to survive in power. The United States will inevitably be caught up in this reaction. Seen in that light, trouble is built into every clause of this demeaning treaty, composed as it is with a timid eye on the superpatriots of the Senate and their constituency of hawks.

Even without being able to predict all the consequences of this treaty's rejection, it seems preferable to us that it be voted down. To ratify it would be to ratify the continuation of this country's brand of neocolonialism for another whole generation. Is that what the people of the United States really want? We strongly doubt it, and from the shambles of rejection there is a chance that public pressures (both here and in Latin America) could arise for an arrangement about the Canal that would be both reasonable and just.

No Entangling Alliances

The possibility that the United Auto Workers Union would rejoin the AFL-CIO evaporated on October 5 in Detroit, when the UAW leadership unanimously dropped the subject from its agenda. The advocates of reaffiliation could not argue away the hostility of UAW activists to the idea. The hurdles were the poor image of George Meany as president of the AFL-CIO, his cold-war policies, his record of animosity toward the late Walter Reuther and to the ideas personified by the UAW over the years. Meany won the factional battles against Reuther; he lost the war. Meany was able to turn the AFL-CIO into his puppet show, and keep the organization as an integral part of the cold-war machine. The cost was, and remains, the affiliation of a dynamic union, with a good reputation, and with 1.5 million members.

Douglas Fraser, president of the UAW, took a calculated risk when he advocated re-entry into the federation, and the cards continued to fall against him. The dismal record of the AFL-CIO lobbyists in the last year didn't help Fraser, nor did the current disagreement between the UAW and Meany over U.S. withdrawal from the International Labor Organization. (See article by Barbara Koeppel in next week's *Nation*.) Leaders of the UAW know that Meany is the most adamant voice in Washington for a policy which would wreck the ILO. They gag at the idea of his speaking for them on anything.

The UAW decision is a blow to the AFL-CIO leaders who wanted the UAW to return and become a fresh voice in the top councils. They will now have to assume a greater burden of independence, for they cannot hope to lean on someone else. For the UAW, nothing is really lost. As in the past decade, the union can and will work with other unions on major problems, whether it be to circumvent Meany's neutrality for Nixon, to lobby for the NLRB reform bill, to support Cesar Chavez, or otherwise to engage in social causes in the Reuther tradition.

Given the arrogance and venom of the Meany faction toward liberals, intellectuals, environmentalists and the whole spectrum of people concerned with social issues, it may well be that the UAW will increase its attractiveness as a labor ally for such groups precisely because it is not affiliated with the AFL-CIO. For Douglas Fraser and the other UAW leaders, the current turn of events becomes both a challenge and an opportunity. The notion that such reaffiliation was a tactic to help revitalize the AFL-CIO simply was not good enough for most UAW activists, as they made clear in the two-month debate on the issue. Now the UAW has little choice but to remain, by example, the independent pacesetter for decent unionism and social causes. That's a task worth performing, and in the finest tradition of the UAW. B.J. Widick

A Very Promising Man

When President Carter made his major policy statement on American arms sales last May 19, it was greeted, as befits all sweeping declarations from a new administration, with equal measures of excitement and skepticism. Americans are troubled by their government's eagerness to sell sophisticated weapons to clients in every volatile corner of the globe, and the essence of Carter's statement—that ". . . the United States will henceforth view arms transfers as an exceptional foreign policy implement, to be used only in instances where it can be clearly demonstrated that the transfer contributes to our national security interests"—was unequivocal enough to raise expectations of change. Closer study of Carter's remarks (see Michael Klare, "How We Practice Arms Restraint," *The Nation*, September 24) showed that planned exemptions to the new policy sharply reduced its practical scope; but there was hope that Carter had shifted the government's moral

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weight, and that substantial sales cutbacks would result.

Recent events, however, call even that possibility into question. In *The New York Times* of October 9, Seymour Hersh reports that a "major debate" is developing within the administration over the proposed sale of 140 extremely advanced F-16 fighters to Iran. Proponents of the sale press their usual arguments about the benefits to Iranian (thus American) national security and to the American economy. Opponents within the administration, says Hersh, worry about the effect of the sale on Carter's credibility—as well they might. The F-16 deal comes on the heels of Carter's success in cowing Congressional opposition and pushing through the sale—also to Iran—of the AWACS airborne warning system. AWACS will cost the Shah $1.2 billion; the F-16s as much as $2 billion more in 1978 alone.

The dollar figures are interesting not only because they are so enormous but also because they pose a political problem for Carter. In his May 19th statement he pledged to reduce arms sales in fiscal year 1978 below the level of 1977. Congress' stalling on the AWACS sale, though ultimately ineffectual, prevented Carter from reckoning the $1.2 billion in the 1977 column, which would have made easier a reduction the next year. Now, with both the AWACS and the F-16s due to be sold in 1978, Carter faces what Sen. John Culver (D., Iowa) of the Armed Services Committee calls "some tough decision making." He must either sharply slice arms transfers—whether it be the F-16s or other transactions—or break his promise.

That the decision may be to break the promise rather than spike the guns, is indicated in a report from the research division of the Library of Congress. It notes that military sales will be considerably higher in the first year of Carter's Presidency than in the last year of Ford's, and concludes dryly: "Rather than being used as an 'exceptional foreign policy implement,' United States arms transfers continue to occur on a rather routine basis." The tone is one of disappointment that, as *The New York Times* remarked, there has been "no sign of any meaningful restraint."

Administration apologists have their excuses for this state of affairs, some of them valid. They point out that arrangements for many of the fiscal 1977 sales were made by the Ford administration. They also lament the terrific pressures they feel from foreign "allies" and domestic arms producers, and they argue that changing arms sales policy is like turning around a 500,000-ton supertanker: it must be done judiciously. But granting the reality of the problems, it is still disquieting that Carter, by offering such a ringing promise of reform in May, made it likely that the new policy would become, as the Library of Congress report says, a "victim of its own rhetoric."

Surely Carter realizes that he must call a halt to arms sales somewhere or be branded a demagogue. The cancellation of one major deal would be both a symbol and an important first step, and the F-16 sale to Iran lies ready to hand. Given Iran's regard for human rights, the political risks of denying it jets are few; even Senate Majority Leader Byrd has called for a moratorium on sales to the Shah. Carter has been having a hard time with promises; this is one he could keep with minimum trouble to himself and some benefit to the rest of the world.

Pray, Pay and Sin No More

It seems that the Rev. Billy Graham is in trouble. This time, this country's President got himself reborn without help from that omnipresent spiritual adviser to the White House. And during last year's campaign, one of Carter's sons was unkind enough to suggest that Graham's degree in divinity was the kind that comes in the mail upon payment of a fee—that was in retaliation for the Reverend Billy's conspicuous preference for Gerald Ford.

It is true that Billy Graham has generally done better when the Republicans have been the party in need of his spiritual counseling. Lyndon Johnson, a man who feared men more than he did God, would occasionally use Graham as a backdrop of piety to offset his normal blasphemy, but it was Eisenhower and then Nixon who employed the evangelist as a steady prop in the White House. Graham was delighted to give his blessing to these powerful men; it was the best sort of advertising for his money-making crusades, of which more later.

Eisenhower's conversion, so to speak, began when Billy rather provocatively handed him a Bible the first time they met. President Ike, not noted as a churchgoer, was quickly persuaded of the image advantages to be gained from having a prominent preacher around the White House. The payoff came whenever Graham emerged from a session of Executive shriving to announce on the mansion's steps that all was well because the big man inside had just prayed with him; the nation and its leaders were back on the straight and narrow.

With Richard Nixon, a back-slidden Quaker, the President-to-evangelist relationship became positively symbiotic. Nixon's keen eye for public relations recognized in Graham a master at that trade and he all but installed him as Secretary of Benediction. He once declared that "When I have a decision to make involving a moral issue, I counsel first with Billy Graham." History does not record the whereabouts of the Reverend Graham on the day when Nixon decided to lie about Watergate.

The John F. Kennedy era was a time of penance for Graham. The late President had no taste for smarm, so the preacher's pulpit on the White House steps declined in value during those thousand days, despite Graham's best efforts to keep his sedulously cultivated reputation as confessor to any President. Now he has the problem of a President who drops the Creator's name with easy familiarity, and exhibits no inclination to share his spiritual mantle with any other preacher.

And Billy Graham has other problems, too—of the legal sort. The state of Minnesota, where the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association makes its comfortable home, is getting tired of having its requests for data on the income, outgo and investments of that $23 million enterprise returned "addressee unknown." It was only a while ago that the prosperity of this evangelistic combine got to be known, along with the multimillion dollar appraisal of its assets. Minnesota feels it has a right and a duty to find out how that money is raised and how those untaxable dollars are spent. It is reported that the main source of this charitable cascade is in an elaborate mailing operation that sends out 52 million

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appeals a year and that this bread upon the waters brings 2 million contributions, the average being $9. That comes to $18 million a year, a nice little business. Whatever the rewards in heaven for the charity of the donors, they make a handsome compensation on earth for the labors of Billy Graham and his fellow crusaders.

But there's the nagging question: what happens to all that money? It's a question Graham has so far refused to answer. To add to his woes, the Better Business Bureau has become inquisitive, embarrassingly linking Graham's Evangelistic Association to, among others, the dubious operations of Korea's Messianic Sun Myung Moon, in the ranks of those who raise tax-free money from the public without saying how and why they spend it. (The Graham pitch includes an annuity scheme, with the pay-off split between the donor and the Billy Graham operation. That, Minnesota stubbornly claims, involves the evangelist in the selling of securities.)

"You can put no price on salvation," Graham once said to Mickey Cohen, the mobster. Cohen, whom he had paid $11,000 to come to Madison Square Garden and be "saved" at his first big "crusade" in that New York arena, was asking Graham how he squared hiring sinners for redemption with his religious protestations. It was a good question. Billy's answer was a classic example of dexterous ad-libbing, but it may not satisfy the public authorities in Minnesota, and a lot of other Americans, about the religiosity racket in this country.

THE 'CLAIMSMEN' AND THE 'TRADERS'

U.S. Business Squabbles Over Cuba

ALFRED L. PADULA, Jr.

The same U.S. corporations whose overwhelming presence in Cuba helped stimulate Castro's revolution are now maneuvering to take command of U.S. policy toward Cuba. If they succeed, they may well push the full normalization of relations between the two countries into the indefinite future.

Eighteen years ago, when Castro began to carry out his agrarian reform, the protests of U.S. landowners and sugar corporations whose properties were expropriated helped escalate a tit-for-tat confrontation which ended in the socialization of the Cuban economy, the Bay of Pigs, and the missile crisis of 1962. Now a number of these same American investors have organized a potent new lobby, the Joint Corporate Committee on Cuban Claims (JCCCC). These "claimsmen" say that American investors are entitled to $1.8 billion, plus 6 percent interest per annum, or a grand total of $4 billion in compensation for their Cuban losses. They do not expect to get all of that, but they will try to get all they can. To press their case, they have hired Clark Clifford's influential Washington law firm.

Opposing the claimsmen is another powerful sector of the American business community—the "traders," who, remembering the almost $1 billion per year of U.S.-Cuban trade before 1959, are eager to commence economic relations without preconditions. The struggle between traders and the claimsmen, as they and their allies maneuver to win support in the Congress and the White House, will present an enlightening—if not edifying—object lesson in the making of our Latin American policy. (See "The Real Latin American Policy" by Alan Howard, *The Nation*, October 15.)

The principal instrument of the claimsmen, the JCCCC, was organized in the fall of 1975, when Congress was discussing legislation to end the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. The chairman of the JCCCC is Robert W. Hutton, president of Lone Star Industries, which lost a $25 million cement plant in Cuba. He believes that a claim settlement must precede trade relations. Castro, on the other hand, states that he will not even discuss claims until the current embargo, a "very serious act of hostility," is lifted.

American investors in Cuba have always believed that the U.S. Government ought to safeguard their interests.* In the months immediately after Castro nationalized their properties in 1959 and 1960 they waited patiently for an American countermove. John L. Loeb, the New York investment banker, whose family and close associates lost more than $20 million when their Atlantica del Golfo sugar company was expropriated, assured his Cuban foreman in late 1959 that their company would soon be recouped. He promised that they would all have a celebration in the Floridita bar in Havana after the 1961 sugar harvest. An official of the United Fruit Company voiced equal optimism, saying that "this kind of nutty thing [expropriation of American property] has happened before" but that "someone with better sense" would soon be in power, and the properties returned. This optimism sank—along with the Cuban exile invaders—in the mangrove swamps of the Bay of Pigs in 1961.

Thereafter the big companies seemed to lose interest. Castro had neither the means nor the will to pay. For some of the multinationals, their Cuban losses were of little moment. Others were able, like Boise Cascade, parent of the Cuban Electric Company, which had a certified loss of $267 million, to achieve substantial tax write-offs. One small claimant thought that Standard Oil, which lost $72 million in Cuba, was able, like King Midas, to turn its loss into a profit.

Alfred Padula, Jr., assistant professor of history at the University of Maine, is completing Middle Class Falling, *a study of Cuba in the years 1959 to 1961.*

*The Overseas Private Investment Corporation was established in 1957 to protect American interests abroad, but it insures only investments made after it came into being.

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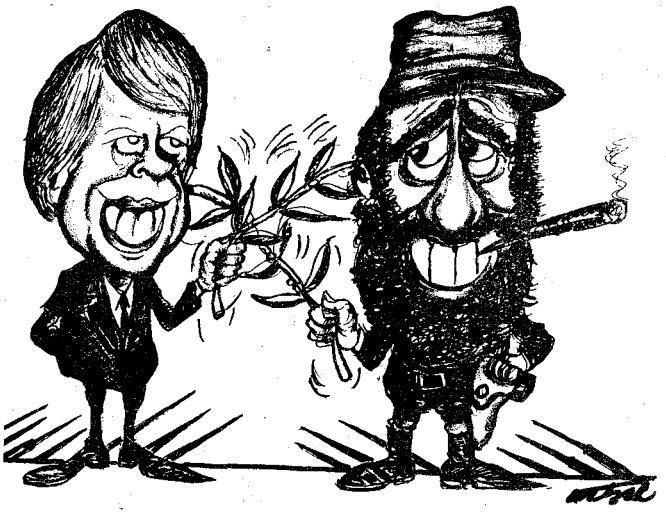
However, in 1962, a number of Miami-based small claimants banded together to form the Cuban Claims Association. With the help of Florida legislators, the association pressed Congress for some form of recompense. These efforts failed, but in 1964 Congress did order the U.S. Foreign Claims Settlement Commission to calculate the amount of losses suffered by Americans, thus to be prepared for future negotiations with the Cubans. Over an eight-year period ending in 1972, the commission reviewed 8,816 claims for $3.3 billion, a sum testifying to the extraordinary U.S. penetration of Cuba's prerevolutionary economy. Of these claims, 5,911, for a total of almost $1.8 billion, were judged legitimate by the claims commission's examiners.

A key argument of the claimsmen is that U.S. firms, contrary to popular belief, have not made good their Cuban losses through tax write-offs. The JCCCC says that a survey of its members shows that only 12 percent of certified claims have been recouped in this manner, and that in any case the maximum a company could recover, given U.S. tax laws, would be about half its loss.

One reason for the low level of tax write-offs may be that ten of the JCCCC's thirteen largest members are sugar companies, many of which had the majority of their assets in Cuba, and thus had no U.S.-based profits against which to write off their Cuban losses. Indeed, almost three-fourths of the JCCCC membership's dollar claim of $766 million represents losses by U.S.-owned sugar companies. The largest of these claimants is Borden's, which is asking $109 million plus interest, or about $214 million in all. This claim is for what was once the world's largest sugar estate, a sugar fiefdom measuring 42 by 30 miles, and populated by 75,000 persons. Borden's did not acquire this subsidiary, the North American Sugar Company, until 1971, more than a decade *after* the confiscation of its Cuban holdings, when its principal assets had been reduced to three refineries in the United States and some sugar acreage in Florida. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, Borden's purchased North American Sugar with an exchange of stock worth $20 million. Thus for Borden's, "full compensation" would mean a windfall of extraordinary dimensions.

Substantial portions of the sugar companies' claims are for land. Amstar, America's largest sugar refiner (Domino, Spreckels) has had its Cuban losses certified at $81 million. This includes $27.5 million for 552,808 acres of land. United Fruit (United Brands) is seeking $85 million, with more than $40 million of this for its 270,000 acres of "land and cultivations." The sugar companies often acquired land quite cheaply in the early 20th century. Thus the Cuban review, *Bohemia*, alleges that United Fruit acquired its first holdings in Oriente Province, then an inaccessible forest, for a few cents an acre; now UFCO seeks $150 an acre. It is safe to conclude that most of the JCCCC's ten sugar companies had in fact recouped their original investments many times over by 1959.

Another argument of the JCCCC is that Cuba must be obliged to pay in order to protect the principle of reimbursement for expropriated properties. To forgive Cuba its sins might stimulate financial irresponsibility elsewhere in the Third World. Why, the reasoning goes,



should financially strapped nations like Chile or Peru pay for the U.S. copper companies they have nationalized, if Cuba is to be forgiven? And what would be the status of American banks, like the National City Bank of New York, which lost $6 million in Cuba, but which, more important, has tens of millions loaned out to the Third World? Would American softness toward Cuba encourage defaults elsewhere? Or should one argue that the tangled history of U.S.-Cuban relations, with all the damages each inflicted on the other, constitutes a special case?

Perhaps the most puzzling fact about the JCCCC is that it includes so few members. Although it represents some 42 percent of the value of U.S. claims against Cuba, its members include only fifty-one companies and individuals, or less than 1 percent of all the certified claimants. One can understand that the smaller claimants (there are 5,354 under $100,000) cannot afford the time or money to join the JCCCC. But it is extraordinary that only fifty-one of the 131 claiming more than $500,000 have troubled to join. One explanation is that many firms, some with sizable claims, are among the "traders"—they want to resume economic relations without waiting for preconditions to be met. Then later, privately, they may be able to resolve their claims.

Among the traders, Coca-Cola, which has a claim of $27.5 million against Cuba, is the most conspicuous. Coke's interests in the island are multiple. It would like to renew a business that once sold 300 million bottles of soft drinks a year in Cuba. It is eager to protect this market from the designs of Pepsi-Cola, whose representatives have already been to Havana. And Coke, as America's largest single consumer of sugar (it takes 10 percent of the total) is always looking for cheap new sources of supply. Its chairman, J. Paul Austin, was a recent visitor to Cuba, reputedly as a special envoy from his friend, President Carter.

Coke has many natural allies. For example, G.M. and Ford are also conspicuously absent from the JCCCC's roster. They lost, respectively, $4.5 million and $2 million in Cuba, but for them compensation is not as significant as the trade they are already enjoying with Cuba through their Argentine subsidiaries. In July 1976, a House subcommittee noted that in the previous nine months $293

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million worth of goods were licensed by the U.S. Treasury for shipment to Cuba. Some of this did not go, because Cuba's ability to pay declined with the drop in world sugar prices. Much that did go was composed of grains and cereals sold by U.S. subsidiaries in Canada.

Other U.S. firms are eager to participate in direct trade. Thus over the past months, Kirby Jones, a former aide to Sen. George McGovern, has been escorting executives by the dozens to Havana—for $3,500 each. Among these were representatives of International Harvester, 3M, Caterpillar Tractor, Abbott Laboratories, John Deere, the FMC Corporation, the First National Bank of Chicago, Control Data, Honeywell, Boeing and Xerox. Dow Chemical told *The Wall Street Journal* in 1975 that it was ready to rent an office in Havana "tomorrow and could be shipping from our facility in Freeport, Texas, within thirty days." The Port of Miami wants the Cuban trade as do the East Coast railroads. Congressmen from rice-growing districts in Louisiana, whose politics are extremely conservative, have confessed with some chagrin that rice surpluses in that state had turned them into supporters of trade with Fidel.

While the traders have powerful allies, so do the claimsmen. Principal among these are U.S. domestic sugar and citrus interests which fear the competition of a resumed trade with Cuba. Indeed, these interests may well support a demand for full compensation as a device to bar *all* trade with Cuba. The U.S. sugar industry is currently in crisis. Sugar beet growers from Maine to California and cane growers in Florida, Louisiana and Hawaii are in trouble, thanks to strong inflows of foreign sugar, the increasing use of high fructose corn sweeteners (which *Business Week* estimates will meet 30 percent of U.S. sweetener needs by 1980) and low world prices. Citrus interests openly oppose Cuban imports. Sen. Richard Stone of Florida is already warning that his state cannot compete with a Cuba whose labor costs are "minute," thanks in part to its massive use of "child labor" in citrus production. Other natural allies of the claimsmen are the right wing of the Cuban exile community and conservative legislators like Sen. Russell Long of Louisiana who has been demanding "one hundred cents on the dollar" from Czechoslovakia, which still owes U.S. claimants some $72 million for property nationalized in 1948.

The claimsmen also have many friends in the New York financial community. Eugene Black, former president of the World Bank, and a director of ITT and Boise Cascade, both heavy losers in Cuba, urged recently in a letter to *The New York Times* that the Cubans ought to agree to pay something as a precondition for the normalization of relations, otherwise "future financial relations will inevitably be sloppy, unstable and unfair."

Would Cuba be willing to pay anything, and could it do so? In 1959, during the first stage of nationalization, some compensation was paid to a few U.S. interests. But the deterioration of U.S.-Cuban relations in those traumatic months, the decline in the Cuban exchequer, and the shifting of available hard currency to buy arms from Western Europe, ended those payments. In later years, some other nations were paid. Canadian bankers were compensated; a program to reimburse the Swiss, the French and the Spanish is underway. But these sums are modest, compared with U.S. investments. Moreover, Cuba was never engaged in a mortal struggle with any of them.

Recent official Cuban pronouncements on compensation seem contradictory. When he visited Cuba in February 1974, Cyrus Eaton was told by a high official that Castro was going to seek recompense for the costs of U.S. economic and military aggression against the island. Cuba's claims would, it was said, exceed those of U.S. claims against Cuba. But a year later, this same official told another visiting American that Cuba would provide "some net transfer of funds to the U.S. Government." Then in late summer 1975, Castro told James Reston of *The New York Times* that, if the United States presented a bill for expropriated properties, he would respond with a bill for the embargo, and possibly a demand for more realistic rents—including back payment—on the 45-square-mile naval base at Guantánamo, which the United States rents for a very modest $3,000 a year. Marcelo Fernandez Font, Minister for Foreign Trade and the first Cuban Cabinet minister to visit Washington in almost seventeen years, warned a group of eighty-five American businessmen, at a meeting sponsored earlier this month by the East-West Trade Council, that Cuba's bill for economic sanctions and "aggressions" would probably exceed the claims against his government made by American companies and individuals (*The New York Times*, October 4).

Even if the Cubans were willing to forget their counterclaims, one wonders how they could justify to themselves, or to their friends abroad, any kind of payment to the United States. After all, for the past seventeen years, Castro and his associates have been declaring that American investments bled, distorted and corrupted Cuban society. Are the Cubans now to compensate their ravishers? Or are all these years of ferocious finger pointing to be forgotten?

If Americans and Cubans sit down to negotiate the individual claims, they will rediscover the extraordinary U.S. penetration of Cuban economy and society. Consider, for example, the claim of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine (Inc.) of New Jersey. The good Augustinians, one of thirty-six former U.S. religious and charitable organizations in Cuba, have a certified loss of $7,885,099. They want, for example, to be reimbursed for Havana's El Cristo Church, built in 1640, several centuries before the Augustinians of New Jersey arrived in Cuba. And they are asking $5 million for the University of Villanueva, Cuba's Catholic university, although it is well known that most of the funds for the Catholic university were contributed from within Cuba, including large donations by Cuban millionaires.

Then there is the claim of an American, a former employee of Cuban President Batista, whose estate is asking almost $500,000 for his 2,500 shares of Cuban Telephone, an ITT subsidiary. (ITT is itself seeking $131 million in compensation for Cuban Telephone.) The Cubans may wonder how a man of otherwise modest means acquired such a fortune. They may well choose to believe that it came to him as part of the "financial

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barrage," as it was called in Cuba, which ITT laid down to clear the way for a telephone rate increase in 1957—an increase for which Batista was later awarded a gold telephone, now on view in Havana's Museum of the Revolution. And there are the requests for compensation by various American hotels, some of which the Cubans believe to be properties of the Mafia. The Cubans are going to be understandably reluctant to compensate such claimants.

Even if Cuba wanted to satisfy American claims, could it pay anything? Certainly it cannot pay much. The Cuban economy is just stumbling ahead; the island's GNP per capita is as stagnant now as it was in the 1950s. Cuba has a debt of almost $6 billion to the USSR; virtually everything on the island is rationed. The mainstay of Castro's economy—still the sugar industry—is currently producing, thanks to droughts, spare parts shortages and mismanagement, at levels established a half-century ago, during the salad days of American capitalism. There is not much fat to share out.

Moreover, the Cubans have declared of late that they intend to maintain the current nature of their trading patterns. Thus, the American traders will have to struggle for their share of the 35 percent which is allocated to Western Europe and Japan. This determination to maintain two-thirds of its trading relations with the Socialist bloc would seem not only to limit the possibility of compensation through trade, but also limit the broader American objective, which is to gain a measure of influence in Cuba in order to moderate its policies on human rights and aid to African revolutionaries.

If Cuba will not or cannot pay, there remain several possibilities. The Carter administration might decide it was in the broader national interest to favor the traders and outflank the claimsmen by ending the embargo and opening trade without preconditions. But if it did so, Cuban goods would likely be attached by angry claimsmen as soon as they reached America. It has happened in the past when Cuban sugar, ships and aircraft were impounded by local court orders.

The real hope of the claimsmen seems to be that, in one way or the other, the Congress can be persuaded to compensate them in order to assure normalization of relations with Cuba. The chief counsel for the JCCCC, Samuel McIlwain, has suggested that, if Congress agrees to pay Castro any counterclaims for the Bay of Pigs or CIA-sponsored raids, these sums should be set aside to pay U.S. claimants. Or perhaps Congress might agree to pay back rent on the Guantánamo base, on the understanding that this money would go, via some equitable formula, to the claimsmen.

But one senses that the Congressmen, their hackles raised by the proposed Panama settlement, will not be quick to do anything that might be interpreted as surrendering, even indirectly, to Fidel. The likelihood is that the competing demands of the claimsmen and the traders will contribute powerfully to a paralysis of U.S.-Cuban relations that may last for another decade. □

BUREAUCRATS ABOVE THE LAW

Double-Entry Intelligence Files

ATHAN THEOHARIS

Historians and archivists will welcome the Final Report of the National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials (really two reports, one from the majority and one an alternate). Both versions affirm what has been in some question—not least because of Richard Nixon's acquisitive instincts—that the papers of all federal officials (not only Presidents but bureaucrats, members of Congress and judges) are public property and must be held available for scrutiny by the public. But having made this vitally important finding, the Study Commission evidently felt that the bulk of its task was done. It cites the Federal Records Act of 1950, which obliges the head of each federal agency to "make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures and essential transactions of the agency . . . ," and notes that, to insure compliance with such requirements, the Code of Federal Regulations of 1976 stipulates that "With particular regard to the formulation of basic Government policy, Federal officials are responsible for incorporating in the records of their agencies all essential information on their major actions." The two reports agree that these statutes, together with the Freedom of Information Act, provide sufficient guarantees for the preservation of, and access to, such records, within reasonable bounds of confidentiality and the safeguarding of national security.

This optimism I find unwarranted, in view of recently acquired knowledge about the separate records-keeping and document-destruction practices of government agencies, and particularly the intelligence agencies. When devising multiple filing systems and document-destruction procedures, intelligence bureaucrats have in the past fully recognized that their agencies' reputations and thus

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authority could be damaged should "sensitive" documents of a certain kind ever be publicly disclosed. Despite the assurance of confidentiality provided by "national security" classifications, these officials devised filing procedures that separated extremely sensitive from other "national security" classified documents. This system had a double objective: to permit the prompt destruction of these sensitive documents without leaving behind any clue that such documents had ever existed. Moreover, although some of these record-keeping practices were established before, and others after, the 1950 Act, the legislative requirements that adequate records be created and preserved were deliberately ignored.

Apparently, the National Archives personnel responsible for reviewing agency documents before permitting their destruction had been unaware of these procedures intended to avoid public knowledge of illegal activities. For, on March 26, 1976, the appraiser in the Records Disposition Division of the National Archives' Office of Federal Records Centers who had responsibility for FBI documents authorized (and the archivist subsequently signed) the destruction of *"Closed* files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation *containing investigative reports, inter- and intro-office communications, related evidence* . . . collected or received during the course of public business in accordance with the FBI investigative mandate." (Emphasis added.) Thus, extensive files were destroyed without the responsible Archives personnel ascertaining their historical and public importance. The limited number of personnel (ten) in this Archives Division explains why such voluminous files could not be reviewed. Yet the National Archives has not requested money to hire additional staff for the purpose.

In memorandums of April 11, 1940, November 15, 1941, March 1, 1942, January 16, 1943, March 9, 1943 and November 9, 1944, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover advised bureau officials (both those in Washington and Special Agents in Charge of field offices) how to prepare for submission to headquarters memorandums that were not to be retained and filed in the FBI's general files. These communications were to be typed on pink paper (later blue) the better to keep them separate from white-paper memorandums which, on receipt by Washington, would be given a serial number for filing purposes. In part, Hoover's reason for setting up this color code had been to reduce paper work. A deeper purpose, however, was to enable FBI field offices to convey sensitive information in writing to the FBI Director or Washington headquarters without running the danger that a retrievable record would thereby be created. His April 11, 1940 memorandum identified documents to be destroyed as including those "written merely for informative purposes, which need not be retained for permanent filing." The March 1, 1942 instruction more specifically identified these as including memorandums "prepared solely for the benefit of the Director and other officials and eventually to be returned to the dictator [of the memorandum] to be destroyed, or retained in the Director's office."

In 1942 the bureau instituted a "Do Not File" procedure for all field-office requests for authorization to conduct break-ins, along with the documents that formally approved these requests. Such papers were not to be given serial numbers, nor to be filed under the appropriate case or caption category. Whenever Hoover or his headquarters staff deemed it advisable to destroy them, they could vanish without a trace. An internal bureau memorandum of July 19, 1966, from William Sullivan to Cartha De Loach (both men at the time were assistants to the Director) describes in detail the Do Not File procedure. To prevent excessive recourse to break-ins—which Sullivan characterized as "clearly illegal"—and to make sure that sufficient care was taken to prevent their discovery, prior written authorization from the Director or assistant director was required for all such crimes. Under normal procedures, of course, this would create a retrievable record, and the Do Not File device was invented to avoid that hazard. In September 1975 Congressional testimony, former FBI Assistant Director Charles Brennan conceded that this was indeed one purpose of the Do Not File procedure. It would also enable the bureau to comply with court disclosure orders, since witnesses could affirm that a search of FBI records had been made and no evidence uncovered of illegal government activities.

The recent discovery of this separate file keeping raises additional questions about the FBI's way with its records. In the course of reviewing the "Official-Confidential" files formerly retained by Hoover in his personal office, the staff of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities came across the Sullivan-to-De Loach memorandum mentioned above. Mark Gitenstein, the staff counsel who made this find, then noticed that a caption, "PF," had been crossed out in the upper-right-hand corner and the notation added that, in November 1971, the document had been transferred to Hoover's Official-Confidential files. Further investigation established, first, that "PF" stood for Hoover's "Personal Files"; second, that this document, along with seven other documents, had been transferred from the "B" entry in the Personal Files ("B" for "Black Bag" jobs or break-ins) to Hoover's Official-Confidential files and, third, that shortly after his death in May 1972, Hoover's Personal Files had been sent to his home. There, following Hoover's instructions but allegedly after first reviewing the voluminous Personal Files to insure that they contained no official documents, the FBI Director's personal secretary, Helen Gandy, destroyed them. In her December 1975 testimony, Ms. Gandy maintained that she had found no other official documents.

Given the decidedly official character of the Do Not File memorandum (the seven other items remain classified, but assuredly Hoover in 1971 considered them official), we confront the not very credible possibility that the only alphabetical entry in Hoover's Personal Files to contain official documents had been the letter "B." The process by which documents were selected for transfer and destruction prevents us from knowing whether the requirements of the 1950 Act and the 1976 Code were actually met.

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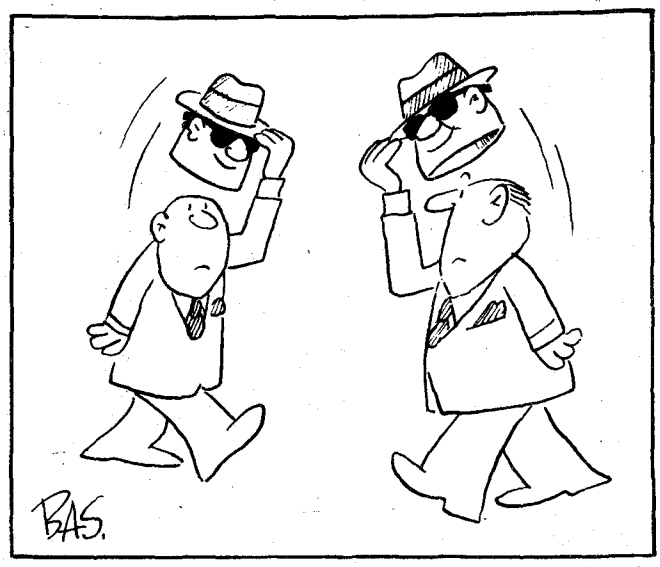

Tachydromos (Greece)

Obviously, a Do Not File procedure allows those concerned to deny knowledge of the extent and nature of recognizably illegal or "sensitive" activities, and other recent disclosures suggest that such separate filing procedures were not confined to break-ins. Thus, Sullivan's 1969 reports from Paris to Washington headquarters on his surveillance of nationally syndicated columnist Joseph Kraft were sent under the Do Not File procedure. In addition, despite Atty. Gen. Nicholas Katzenbach's 1966 requirement that all requests for authority to wiretap be submitted in writing and the names of those subject to such surveillances be included in a special file (an ELSUR Index), the wiretap records of the seventeen individuals (White House and National Security Council aides and reporters) tapped between 1969 and 1971, allegedly to uncover the source or sources of national security leaks, were not placed in this Index or filed with other FBI "national security" wiretap records. (Nor were the 1972 wiretap records on Charles Radford, a lower-level military aide suspected of having leaked National Security Council documents to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, included in the ELSUR Index or filed with other FBI "national security" taps. And FBI reports on its surveillance of Anna Chennault in October/November 1968 were "protected and secured" to insure that they would not be discovered and thereby affect that year's Presidential race.) Accordingly, when Sullivan told Asst. Atty. Gen. Robert Mardian in July 1971 that Hoover might use these taps to blackmail the President, Mardian, after consulting with Nixon, transferred the tap records from the FBI to the safe of White House aide John Ehrlichman. Because they were not listed originally in the ELSUR Index, there was no record either that these files had been transferred or that the wiretaps had been carried out.

In another area, when Congress in September 1971, repealed the emergency detention title of the McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950, Hoover asked Atty. Gen. John Mitchell how to handle the policy documents of the Justice Department's independently established, broader—and illegal—detention program. On February 19, 1972, Mardian advised Hoover to destroy these materials. Furthermore, upon concluding the study that resulted in the recommended changes of intelligence procedure (known as the Huston Plan), Hoover in June 1970 advised other intelligence officials who had participated to destroy this plan's working copies.

During the pretrial hearings in the Judith Coplon case, the FBI's extensive and illegal use of wiretapping was revealed because Federal District Judge Albert Reeves ruled that certain FBI reports be submitted as evidence. Hoover then devised yet another filing procedure. In Bureau Bulletin No. 34 of July 8, 1949, he ordered that "facts and information which are considered of a nature not expedient to disseminate or would cause embarrassment to the bureau, if distributed" were henceforth to be omitted from agent reports, but detailed in the administrative pages that accompanied these reports. Normally, agents employed administrative pages to highlight investigative findings or to outline future investigative efforts. Because those pages could be kept separate from the reports, Hoover's order would allow the FBI to conduct questionable or illegal activities, and profit from their findings without risking disclosure during trial proceedings or even without responsible Justice Department officials ever learning of them.

This need to prevent discovery of illegal FBI investigative activities had also led Hoover on October 19, 1949 to advise all Special Agents in Charge how to hide the fact that the bureau was conducting an extensive "security index" program. It predated passage of the McCarran Internal Security Act and was partially based on a secret directive of August 3, 1948 from Atty. Gen. Tom Clark. The FBI, however, began to compile additional indexes—a Communist Index, a "Detcom (Communist Detention) program" and a "Comsab (Communist Saboteurs) program"—without the Attorney General's direction or knowledge. To guard against discovery of this program by the press and the Congress—as well as to prevent the Attorney General from discovering the bureau's independent extension of his authorization—Hoover advised SACs: "No mention must be made in any investigative report relating to the classifications of top functionaries and key figures, nor to the Detcom or Comsab programs, nor to the security index or the Communist Index. These investigative procedures and administrative aids are confidential and should not be known to any outside agency."

Then, when the FBI after February 1958, began to receive copies of letters illegally obtained through the agency's closely guarded mail cover/intercept program in New York City, similar filing procedures were set down, as described in a November 26, 1962 memorandum. Copies of intercepted mail were to be destroyed (if of no value) or filed in a secure area, separate from other FBI files. Such copies were also not to be included in the subject's case file, although a cross-reference would permit retrieval. When significant information found in this intercepted mail was sent on to FBI field offices or other divisions, it was to be paraphrased to disguise the source. Agents in Charge of this project in New York were specifically warned not to disseminate the obtained information outside the bureau and not to cite it in any investigative report.

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Are there other FBI files? Obviously, this question cannot be answered definitively. When interviewed by David Wise, author of *The Police State*, William Sullivan claimed that John Mohr (then an FBI assistant director) had removed "very mysterious files" from Hoover's office after the FBI Director's death. These were "very sensitive and explosive files," Sullivan maintained, and not all of them were located by Atty. Gen. Edward Levi when he found "164 such files in the Justice Department."

Nor were these separate filing procedures and the attendant document destruction confined to the FBI. The CIA's drug program documents were destroyed in January 1973. Also, during the September 1975 Congressional testimony, CIA Director William Colby affirmed that the agency's record-keeping practices made it impossible to reconstruct past CIA activities involving the production and retention of highly poisonous toxins: "Only a very limited documentation of activities took place"; the desire for compartmentation involving sensitive matters "reduced the amount of record keeping."

In 1969, the National Security Agency devised similar filing and destruction procedures. In 1967, the NSA had begun to intercept the international electronic communications of targeted American citizens and organizations. The NSA had the equipment necessary to intercept all electronic messages, and could isolate particularly desired messages according to pre-selected names or code words. To exploit this capability, the CIA and the FBI provided the NSA with a so-called Watch List of individuals or organizations whose messages were to be intercepted. Informal document transmittal and separate filing methods were then devised. Being perfectly aware that such interception was illegal, NSA officials in 1969 worked out procedures to hide the existence of the activity and their involvement in it. Reports produced through this eavesdropping were given no serial numbers, were not filed with other NSA reports, were hand-delivered only to those officials having knowledge of the program, and were distributed "For Background Use Only." Agencies receiving the material were directed either to destroy it or return it to the NSA within two weeks.

Are these separate file-keeping and destruction procedures merely aberrational practices that have now been abandoned? Unfortunately, in the absence of proof to the contrary we must assume that they may be continuing or might be resumed. It is unlikely that before 1975 responsible, informed citizens would have accused the intelligence agencies of such practices, and if they had, few Americans would have taken them seriously. Furthermore, recent testimony under oath by intelligence officers and their responses to document requests during the first intensive Congressional inquiry into the practices of the intelligence community have raised additional questions about the intelligence agencies' file-keeping practices.

Thus in 1975, FBI Director Clarence Kelley during a press conference, senior FBI officials testifying before Congress, and FBI memorandums responding to specific inquiries of the Senate Select Committee all affirmed that FBI break-ins during domestic security investigations had ceased in 1966, and that the exact number of such past FBI break-ins could not be provided because, thanks to the Do Not File procedure, written records did not exist. In 1976, however, in response to a court order involving a damage suit brought against the government by the Socialist Workers Party, the FBI not only produced break-in documents but these documents disclosed that FBI domestic security break-ins continued after 1966 and as late as July 1976.

In addition, William Colby testified in September 1975 that the CIA could not be fully responsive to the Senate Select Committee's queries concerning the CIA's drug programs and specifically its toxin program. Not only had documents concerning the CIA's general drug programs been destroyed in January 1973, but the agency's desire for compartmentation of sensitive materials had "reduced [the] amount of record keeping" and thus there had been "only a very limited documentation of [the] activities [which] took place." But in July 1977, contradicting Colby's assertions, CIA Director Stansfield Turner advised the Senate Select Committee that documents pertaining to the CIA's past drug program had been discovered after "extraordinary and extensive search efforts." These, Turner reported, had been found in retired archives filed under financial accounts. The newly discovered documents showed that CIA drug testing on American citizens had been more extensive than had been disclosed in 1975.

The file-keeping procedures, and their underlying intent to prevent public/Congressional knowledge of questionable or patently illegal activities, challenge the assumptions underlying the National Study Commission recommendations. Existing law and regulations do not appear adequate to guarantee retention of public papers, thus assuring that the Freedom of Information Act will give access to the full record of federal agency practices. The problem is more complex and thorny than the commission recognized. Perhaps the preservation and access to such papers cannot be insured. But the attempt should nevertheless be made, and a number of additional safeguards are required. First, the Congress should enact legislation specifically forbidding the maintenance of separate files and requiring federal officials to create a unitary and complete filing system. Heavy fines and criminal penalties should be provided for noncompliance. Second, an oversight committee should be created to insure that more dual, triple or even more elaborate systems do not continue, will not be devised, or if devised cannot remain undetected. An independent board of archivists, journalists and historians might well be created to provide this oversight. It must have subpoena powers and complete authority to inspect agency filing systems. Third, and perhaps this would be less a procedural change than a political awakening, cold-war secrecy and national security assumptions must be critically reassessed.

The intelligence agencies' record-keeping practices in the recent past show their bureaucrats to have felt themselves above the law. Rather than being bound to respect legal or constitutional limitations, these officials decided that the law could be safely circumvented, first by ex-

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ploiting popular and Congressional tolerance for secrecy, and then by devising elaborate filing procedures to prevent discovery. What is needed for a return to government by law, and not by men, is to create safeguards against the tendency of intelligence agency officials to decide for themselves, and secretly, what national policy shall be. Central to this is the need to reaffirm the people's "right to know" as much about national security as it does about economic policy. Otherwise the recommendations offered in both National Study Commission reports could prove to be cosmetic, and that is not what their proponents intended. □

BEHIND THE BERLIN WALL

SOCIALISM WITH A GERMAN FACE

JONATHAN STEELE

East Germany was on the front page of *The New York Times* on September 24. It was a rare occurrence, caused this time by the news that a stream of dissident writers, musicians and theatre people is flowing out of the country. The spate of expulsions—some forced, others merely encouraged—began with Wolf Biermann, the unorthodox Marxist singer-poet who was refused permission to return from a trip to West Germany last autumn.

The government of the German Democratic Republic was at first surprised when scores of other intellectuals protested the exclusion of Biermann. It briefly detained a few of them, put some under house arrest, but left the majority alone until it decided that they too would be better out of the country. In the last ten months the cultural migration has included more than twenty intellectuals. The facts reported in the Western media were true; the events are sad. Western newsmen covering the Belgrade review conference on European Security and Cooperation this month (it opened on October 3) now have a new peg on which to hang legitimate stories about repression in Eastern Europe.

Yet there is also something sorrowful about the inability or unwillingness of most Westerners writing about Eastern Europe to go beyond the clichés. How many reports of the recent exodus from the GDR have contrasted the situation with the position of intellectuals in the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia? In those countries expulsion is a mild form of punishment, when compared with the more usual practice of imprisonment, or internal exile with no chance to pursue one's work. In East Germany an exit visa has become the most common punishment, at least for prominent intellectual dissidents. For those brought up on an ideological diet in which the GDR was always described as the most authoritarian state in Communist Europe this may seem an aberration. Those who remember that East Germany was the only East European state in which the Stalinist purges of the early 1950s produced no executions, may see it as just a mild case of history repeating itself.

No country has had a poorer image abroad than East Germany—the "other Germany" as it has been patronizingly called. The hideous Berlin Wall fixed itself deep in most people's minds as the symbol of a new German brutalism. More than that, it was taken as a symbol of illegitimacy. Here was graphic and deadly proof that the GDR is a bastard state. For two decades the West tried to wish East Germany away. The attempt failed, and the Helsinki Conference of 1975—precursor of this month's meeting in Belgrade—became the coming-out party for the East German leadership. By an accident of the French diplomatic alphabet, Erich Honecker found himself sitting between Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and President Ford. Nothing could have been more ironic than that the East German party leader should be flanked by the heads of government of the two countries which had done more than any others to prevent the GDR's coming into being.

Although the Western boycott was the most aggravating international issue for the GDR, its relations with its allies in Eastern Europe were not without problems. To be sure, it was integrated into the Warsaw Pact and Comecon, but its companions in those bodies were a long time getting over the feeling that the GDR was an artificial state.

In short, East Germany had to gain legitimacy in the eyes of its friends as well as its enemies. During the first postwar years Stalin saw the country primarily as a strategic buffer for the Soviet Union and a source of reparations payments; the interests of the small minority of Communists in the Soviet Zone of Germany took second place. Three times, first under Stalin, then under Malenkov and Beria, and finally under Khrushchev, the USSR toyed with the idea of withdrawing from the country in return for the neutralization of the whole of Germany. Although the Russians hoped, at least in the period just after the war, that a neutral Germany would be leftward-leaning, they were more concerned to insure that its foreign policy was safe than that its political system was Communist. In 1955, to the chagrin of the East German leadership, the Soviet Union recognized the Federal Republic without demanding a diplomatic *quid pro quo* for the GDR. It was not until 1974, almost exactly a year after the GDR's entry into the United Nations, that reciprocity came and the United States recognized East Germany.

Jonathan Steele, Washington correspondent for the Manchester Guardian, *was formerly its East European correspondent. His book,* Inside East Germany: The State That Came in from the Cold, *was published by Urizen Books on October 3.*

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Walter Ulbricht, who ruled the country for most of the postwar period, also had to win legitimacy for the country in the eyes of its own citizens. International recognition would mean little if the society's internal stability was in doubt. And stability could not be based on compulsion alone. There had to be some voluntary consensus behind it. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the GDR's dilemma was this: it wanted international recognition in order to justify and sanction the party's rule, but recognition was likely to bring pressures for a relaxation in that rule. Ulbricht decided that the key was economic development. The stronger East Germany's economy became, the more indispensable it would be to the Russians who would be less tempted to withdraw support. Its allies and enemies would respect it more. And so would its people.

In Eastern Europe for the early years after the war economic development meant installing and expanding heavy industry. Wages were kept low; the shops were given little to sell. In the GDR the workers' riots of June 1953 were needed to persuade the leadership that the people must be allowed a bigger immediate return on their labor. Eight years later, it became clear that still more had to be done. No other East European government has faced the enormous challenge of sharing a language and a frontier with a sister nation to which its citizens could simply transfer—at least until the Berlin Wall was built in 1961. The decision taken then to exclude the reality of West Germany was accompanied by an equally important decision to exclude the myth as well. Ulbricht resolved to go all out for economic development in the interest of the consumers and thus prove that, thanks to their own "economic miracle," people in the GDR could live as well as their West German neighbors, and ultimately perhaps better.

In the years since the Wall went up the supply of every kind of consumer-durable has increased considerably. By its economic results the GDR has assured its position. It is the world's eighth industrial nation, measured by output per capita, and it has the highest standard of living in Eastern Europe. By whatever indicator one chooses, whether the percentage of families with cars, the size of people's flats, or the amount of meat they eat, the average family in the GDR is better off than its counterpart in the rest of Eastern Europe. The World Bank has calculated that in 1974 the GDR's per capita income overtook that of Britain. It was already ahead of Italy, Ireland, Spain and Greece. Its Eastern neighbors respect the GDR now as a full partner; they may even fear it a little. Its Western neighbors are beginning to look for lucrative business deals.

The years since the Wall was built have produced in the GDR an air of permanence that convinces most East Germans that the GDR is a viable state, and willy-nilly "their" state. The stubborn West German attitude of officially pretending that East Germany did not exist went on so long that it became counterproductive; whatever they thought of their own state, many East Germans became tired of being pitied or patronized by West Germany. The generation born since 1940 is understandably baffled by the argument that East Germany ought never to have been created; for them it has always existed. The country's successes in the Olympic Games created widespread satisfaction at home, and forced hundreds of millions of television viewers around the world to come to terms with the GDR's reality. In 1976 its athletes won forty gold, twenty-five silver, and twenty-five bronze medals; it gained more first prizes than any other country except the Soviet Union, which has more than thirteen times its population.

The GDR is recognizably German as well as Socialist. German-ness is a notoriously hard concept to define. It involves one in trying to characterize a people and that always runs the risk of prejudice. One excuse for doing so is that all over Eastern Europe one finds much the same stereotypes among Germans as prevail in the West. They are known for hard work, efficiency, intensity, respect for authority, and a well-hidden sense of humor.

At an anecdotal level one could give example after example of the German-ness of the GDR—the cleanness of its streets, its fondness for uniforms, the need to show one's papers before going into any office building. In the Museum of German History in Berlin they display a photograph of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor visiting Hitler at Berchtesgaden in 1937. The Duke was forced to abdicate from the throne of England, says the caption, "because of his pro-Fascist views." No nonsense about his love for a commoner, an American divorcée, or other such trivia. In some East German newspapers Sunday is the day for "lonely hearts" advertisements. "Am active scientist, practical, reliable. Seek husband, between 43 and 50, with Marxist-Leninist view of the world." Further down the column was this one: "Capable pensioner seeks similar companion. Interested in gardening. Ordinary worker preferred, not a drinker." What could be more direct, more explicit, more purposeful, more "German"?

In its internal policies, as well as in its attitude to the West, the party leadership of East Germany has always been tougher and more uncompromising than its counterparts in the rest of Eastern Europe. Not even the Soviet Union has shown such firmness of ideological principle. With the coming of East-West détente in the early 1970s, when other Communist Parties soft-pedaled their public criticisms of Western imperialism, the East Germans carried on largely as before. While *Pravda* kept almost total silence on the Watergate affair, the main party paper in East Germany, *Neues Deutschland*, carried frequent and accurate criticisms of President Nixon. It gave prominent coverage to the triumphant North Vietnamese sweep toward Saigon in March and April of 1975; an apparently embarrassed *Pravda* never once put the news on the front page.

The GDR's stance is commonly explained as "conservatism"; to defend itself and screen its people from the attractions of West Germany, it is said, the party leadership overcompensated. It set out, so the argument continues, on a twin policy of confrontation with the West and ideological orthodoxy at home. Although this functional explanation has some truth, it is too flat. There are important historical and psychological reasons for East Germany's distinctive stance, some of them going back beyond Hitler to the days of the Weimar

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Republic, where the Communist Party was one of the strongest forces on the German Left. The party has a long, collective memory. Founded in the aftermath of Germany's defeat in World War I, growing into adolescence during the crises and retreats of the 1920s, the party saw the flower of its membership torn asunder, first by the Nazi murder machine and later by Stalin's silent purges. Those who survived the war could not help brooding over the bewildering range of moral, political and physical choices they had been forced to face. To them caution and defensiveness were second nature.

After 1945 they were joined by a new generation of young Communists. All over Eastern Europe, of course, thousands of young people joined the local Communist parties; in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia, party membership soared. In these countries many joined out of genuine idealism, but once it became clear that Communist rule was there to stay, many others took out a party card because they saw it as the key to a good career. From the beginning there was an element of cynicism in the party's midst, and with Stalin's purges in the 1950s and the shattering revelations made about the dead dictator by Khrushchev in 1956, the ranks of the cynics grew. Some of the original idealists left the party, but stayed in the party out of habit, apathy or opportunism. In East Germany there was a vital difference.

Until 1961 the border to the West was open. For the price of a rail ticket on the S-Bahn in Berlin the careerists and the disillusioned could always leave. Thousands did. By a process of natural selection the party in East Germany was left with the most militant and dedicated of the new generation. Together, these Young Believers and the old party survivors formed a party that was inevitably more "ideological" than the parties of its Eastern European neighbors, where pragmatism and opportunism were the rule. The East German party also felt itself heir to a long and proud tradition. After all, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were Germans. Germany was the country where Marx had expected the revolution to come first. The sense of belonging to the potential revolutionary core of Europe gave an added note of seriousness and purpose to the German Left.

The GDR's system certainly represents socialism of a kind, "socialism with a German face." It has some features common to all industrial societies, but in its basic structures it is different from any Western capitalist society. The state owns the means of production; agriculture has been collectivized, and the economy is centrally planned. A revolution has been imposed. The old ruling class has completely disappeared from power; society is now managed by a broadly based and increasingly well-trained elite. Its membership is still relatively open, and the ticket of admission is professional skill as much as loyalty to party ideology.

Political power is centered exclusively in the party, but status and privilege are not confined to the political managers. By now the GDR has achieved a certain homogeneity between different groups and an undoubted leveling out of differences in income. With its universal ten-year schools, the educational system is fairer than the old prewar system of selection. Women have won a more nearly equal place in society than they ever before enjoyed in Germany, or enjoy in West Germany today. The GDR's working mothers have more preschool facilities for children than do their Eastern or Western neighbors. Three-quarters of all preschool children have places in crèches or kindergartens. In many ways the GDR has succeeded in providing its people with stability and security. Streets are clean and pedestrians wait for the green light. The German bogey of inflation is under tight restraint with state control of prices and wages.

"Consumer revolution" has become the pat phrase for the current trend in Eastern Europe and the new prosperity is easily visible. Less visible, but no less real, is the country's social system. In spite of the move toward more consumer benefits, the country's collectivist ideology, implanted now for more than a generation and backed by a substantial narrowing of income differentials, has had an effect. The state accepts the responsibility for providing almost everything, from stable consumer prices to a job for every school-leaver. People expect the state's promises to be kept. They make higher claims on it than do most people in the West.

The collectivist ideology has spread at a second level. All citizens are members of "brigades" or "collectives" in their factories, offices or places of residence. These are more than production teams; they have a social role in arranging some leisure activities, in helping members' families in cases of illness on bereavement, in electing representatives to the lay courts that deal with petty crime and neighborhood disputes. In the West it is fashionable to deplore these collectives as sinister, or to deride them as ineffective. Thirty years of experience in the GDR seem to have ironed out the hard edges. The so-called "*Wohngemeinschaften*" or "house collectives" are indeed often little more than paper organizations. In line with the general trend more private life at home, fewer people bother to keep them going. In the workplace, where the need for collective action is clearer, collectives function better.

In its superficial appearance East Germany has probably changed less than the Federal Republic. In the small towns and villages that were not too badly damaged by the war life still seems much as one imagines it to have been in the 1930s. Where bombs and artillery shells did not fall, the demolitioners' bulldozer and the motorway and parking lot have not brought their chaos either. In Halle, the old-fashioned chimney sweep with top hat and square-cut tail coat still plies his trade. In Leipzig young couples are driven to their wedding reception in a covered horse-drawn carriage, complete with coachman. Visitors from West Germany or elsewhere who knew the area forty or more years ago often go back now to revisit a home town, a childhood seaside resort or student digs. Amazed and delighted, they discover the pub is still on the corner and the sea-front boarding house has not been replaced.

West Germany by contrast has changed greatly. Many observers have remarked that the Federal Republic, with its materialism, its brashness, its competitive and energetic business climate, the style of its suburban life, its non-

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ideological trade unions, and its worship of gadgetry has become the most American country in Europe. East Germany remains perhaps more "German" than West Germany. It is too bad that, with so much else seemingly in its favor, the GDR has decided to harass its intellectuals. Most of them call themselves Socialists, and all they want is a less bureaucratic system. It can well afford to tolerate them, it will be the poorer without them, and it is handing its enemies an obvious headline of indignation. □

REUNION AND INTIMATION

SDS AROUND THE CAMPFIRE

TODD GITLIN

One of the few things that *Newsweek* (September 5) and *People* (September 12) got right in their accounts of the late August reunion of Students for a Democratic Society was the irresistible fact that we met in a camp on the far side of Hell, Mich.

History does like some crude symbols. There was scarcely a person at this reunion who had not some time in the last ten years traversed a private hell within the collective catastrophe. SDS started out as an articulate political community for a generation of radicals; within a few years it became the central organization of the New Left, mobilized community organizations and anti-war projects, then learned fast to speak Marxese and finally went up in factional smoke. It was only seven years from the Port Huron Statement of 1962 ("We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit") to SDS's 1969 crackup into Weathermen ("We are already [a working-class movement] if we put forward internationalist proletarian politics"), Revolutionary Youth Movement II (also supporting "the People's Republics of Korea and Albania"), and Progressive Labor (insisting on *its* true title to the vanguard of the proletariat). By the end, most of the membership were left out in the cold. During that long night of Vietnam, hundreds of thousands of students had passed through this organization, dreamed a radical dream and then watched it curdle into a nightmare.

By the time SDS broke apart, the original activist core —along with counterparts who had worked elsewhere in the New Left—had already been cast adrift. If politics meant the mania of the left-wing sects, perhaps they were not political any longer. Many became therapists, mystics, carpenters, developing crafts with which to practice largely depoliticized versions of the spirit they had once found in the civil rights and anti-war movements. Through the 1970s they wondered what was the political meaning of their hard-learned work. Some resumed interrupted careers, became academics, doctors, lawyers, planners; now they wondered how to continue their political identities when it was simply *so hard* to slog along on that proverbial "long march through the institutions." A few moved toward one of the new Marxist-Leninist grouplets. Many more though, doubled and redoubled their commitments to local political projects, digging in for the long haul as nitty-gritty organizers for welfare and utility reform, for the Equal Rights Amendment, for this or that union or reform candidate.

From among these strands, 200 people were asked to the SDS reunion, and half came. Most had been active in SDS before 1967; some had worked in other New Left projects and fraternal groups, especially from areas where SDS had never amounted to much, notably California. Hundreds of others could have been invited.

Many needs, many agendas. The reunion seemed a sure setup for grandiose expectations, for recriminations, for traditional SDS arrogance, or, as a fallback, for that tiniest common denominator: the clumsy attempt by 100 old comrades to find some common ground for talk. Perhaps, like old vets, we would sing our patriotic songs and swap war stories. Do you remember when?

Indeed, one of the main subjects of discussion at the beginning of the reunion was how reluctant nearly everyone had been to attend. The summer-camp cabins and workshops were thick with fear: that the wretched mutual accusations of late SDS would recrudesce; that one would again have to confront the ex-friends who, last visit, last decade, were accusing one of sexist abuses, insufficient revolutionary zeal, *petit-bourgeois* attitudes. Some still-activists feared that this collection of aging, politically homeless, but (as ever) presumptuous veterans would deceive themselves that it was 1960 again, and in their arrogance lurch into a new, half-baked political organization whose program was camouflaged nostalgia. Others, half-unconsciously, longed for just that organization, and through the week kept referring to the reunion as an SDS *convention*. A Canadian activist said her Canadian nationalist friends had warned her not to go; a gay man said his gay friends had warned *him* not to go. Some dreaded the meeting would be their long-anticipated tribunal; others that it would turn out to be an improvised Esalen Institute, an exercise in nostalgia suffused with the touchy-feelie spirit of instant intimacy. Neither notion was auspicious.

Any recollection of this event begins with its culture: the New Left had always been a cultural presence before it was a political "tendency," and no less so now. There were fewer flickers of out-and-out nostalgia than

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I'd expected: a few old rituals (folk songs around the campfire, dancing in the small hours to oldies-but-goodies), but more powerful, new ones. A Jewish poet led the reunion in an Arapaho Indian round dance: this ethnic combination is perhaps not unusual nowadays. A group of us sang *We Shall Not Be Moved* as we resisted being drawn into such mawkishness: that is less usual. A part-Indian Oklahoman sang a song of the Warsaw ghetto in *Yiddish*: less usual still.

But the choice of identities was more supple, less driven, less embattled than before. The obligatory women's caucus discovered, after a couple of meetings, that it was meeting simply because women were expecting one another to caucus; they decided not to meet further. If women felt that feminist concerns were being scanted, or that they were being cowed by male palaver, they were strong and legitimate enough—after how many years of bitter struggle?—to say so straight to the men. The writer Judith Coburn later told the reunion she had been avoiding mixed politics throughout the 1970s in favor of feminist projects, and now she'd seen what she'd been missing. Meanwhile, the one black present for the whole reunion (SDS had been almost entirely white) felt capable of leading a workshop on racism—not some glamorously distant Theory of Racism and Neocolonialism, not a Theory of Racism in the Working Class, but racism in SDS: and she made there the argument that SDS had abandoned the real civil rights struggle in the late 1960s, chasing instead after snazzy media-trade black gods.

Such things were thought in the late 1960s; they were not said. And never had an SDS meeting asked how many present were Jewish, although in the early 1960s more than one Jew looked at SDS and thought that a measure of its "reality" was that it had more gentiles than Jews—it was *American*. At the same time, some radical Jews outside SDS had thought SDS disconcertingly *goyish*. Now this was all out in the open. A Jewish workshop met twice during the week and it was full of shared cramp about that particular closet, of thirst to learn Jewish history and to explore and argue the ties between radicalism and Jewishness. Some wanted to put together a workshop on religion, but, as with other important subjects, no time was found. Born-again Baptists identified themselves as such. (So did Red-diaper babies: another unacknowledged issue of the 1960s.) These discussions were preliminary, but they were starting to dig deeply.

There were also planned workshops and formal panels of a more analytic cast. Space permits mentioning only a few topics: the meaning of participatory democracy; politics and culture (including some comparable problems of artists and carpenters); the politics of the media; social origins of the New Left; and, at greatest length, the causes of what some called the collapse of SDS and others called the late-1960s "transition." Various lines of argument about the shared past proved compatible. Bob Gottlieb, an organizer of the New York Movement for a Democratic Society in the late 1960s and now author of a book on the *Los Angeles Times*, argued that the New Left had represented part of a "new working class," and that it had gone under because it had fled from the painstaking work of building radical coalitions within that class, pursuing instead one or another phantasm of the True Revolutionary Agency, or, that failing, committing political suicide. Former National Secretary (now therapist) Greg Calvert spoke similarly of a collective "flight from class identity" that led to a loss of moorings. There was finer sociological imagination in these discussions than at most sociology meetings.

Political imagination was scantier—many were reluctant to join current political questions for fear of disrupting the hard-won community. But former President (now political writer) Carl Oglesby made an impression when he argued that, whatever social forces had played themselves out in the 1960s, one political force that had been at work in no small way was the American secret police: informers, *agents provocateurs*, the whole barely uncovered apparatus of the FBI's COINTELPRO, the CIA's domestic operations, and God knows what else. Enthusiastically, the reunion decided to try to retrieve all extant government files—as the Socialist Workers Party is in the process of doing, and as a Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) reunion last year also decided to do.

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The greatest animation was in the spirit that welled up in rituals and happenings, planned and unplanned. The second day, a workshop in homophobia grew tense when a few heterosexuals wanted to know just what gays thought about the family, and really why anyone wanted to be gay in the first place. One of the gay men said he had not encountered such collective hostility in years. Everyone was bristling. The workshop went on past the time set to begin the plenary, as more and more people came to sit on the fringes. Gays say they hadn't thought they needed to teach the alphabet at an SDS reunion. One gay man, sobbing loudly, said his friends had been right to counsel him against returning to his old hurtful scene, and he was going to leave.

But gradually the conversations broke up; the fringes pulled in toward the conversational center and paid attention; the workshop became the plenary. And one by one, other old, bitter divisions cracked open. Some people recalled their failure to cope with the Weatherpeople when they had started, as somebody said in 1969, turning themselves into bricks in order to hurl themselves. Two articulate men, neither of them partial to the "touchy-feelie" style, spoke with evident emotion about the agony of having come from working-class families and finding themselves simultaneously suspected by parents for collegiate snobbery, and denounced by SDSers from elite colleges for domination and elitism. SDS, with its highfalutin class theories, had never faced head-on the class origins of its own people. A mother summoned up her resentment of the full-time organizers who had sneered at the more settled, the more "straight" or "bourgeois," those who had maintained borders of private life as hedges against fanaticism. Artists complained of neglect by the too, too serious Philistines of SDS. The testimonies went on for hours. Who had not been knocked around by the season's definition of right-on revolutionism? The gays had made it possible to uncover more than one old and unhealed wound.

One might have thought that a whole evening of this would be pathetic or self-indulgent, a sign that the New Left was really the soft-headed collective failure that is now enshrined in media mythology. But the process produced a communal high. Even people who had not been active in SDS were shaken and moved; their own hesitations about SDS had been not only corroborated but transcended. It was possible now to move past the competition among victims, the more-oppressed-than-thou catechisms that so often constitute the experience of the 1970s Left. It was possible to move on now. But where?

The past had undergone three days of criticism, some catharsis, some joyful reconnection. A complex process of recollectng had located some of SDS's turning points: hubris and failures of leadership. Now what the reunion hungered for was a collective assertion of the stakes, the full gravity of that movement. Those emotional bonds, those successes and failures, had after all taken place *in the United States of America in the 1960s, in the course of political battles over white supremacy and war.* What had been planned for the third night was a memorial service.

It had been planned, appropriately, by Alan Haber, the founder of SDS in 1960. It was Haber, now in a carpentry collective, who had brought together a group of old SDSers living in the San Francisco Bay Area to organize this reunion fifteen years after Port Huron. (The reunion affectionately dubbed them "the Gang of Six," respecting their initiative and foresight even when wanting this or that discussion to be given more space.) Haber had posted a piece of blank cardboard and asked us to record the names of fallen co-workers, comrades we wished to have publicly remembered. At nightfall, candles flickered on the floor as Haber stood up to read the names of our people. As the night went on, memories got jolted, more names were added.

Haber read the names one by one. "Remember A.J. Muste." "Remember Paul Goodman." People who'd known them stood up to say a few words about A.J. Muste, about Paul Goodman. "Remember Herbert Lee." Who? Herbert Lee was a black Mississippi farmer shot down for "uppityness" in 1961 by a white man during a voter-registration campaign in Amite County. Spontaneously, we sang the civil rights anthem written for Lee: *We'll Never Turn Back.* There were those more easily remembered: Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, James Chaney; the Kent State and Jackson State dead; SDS organizer Carol McEldowney, dead in an auto wreck in 1973. Victims of more obscure massacres: an Austin, Texas Communist organizer murdered in 1967; three blacks murdered in Orangeburg, S.C. in 1968; Ralph Featherstone of SNCC killed by an (unsolved) bomb blast on his way to Rap Brown's trial in 1970. How many blacks, mostly forgotten? The litany cascaded on: suicides of the burned-out; the 1970 townhouse dead; Norman Morrison, Roger LaPorte, Alice Herz, who had immolated themselves in protest against the war; the Rosenbergs, gays. Our own. *So many.* Not the sanctioned ideological heroes, not the mass-cultural gurus affixed onto our generation by the eager promoters of the cultural apparatus: not Mao Tse-tung, not Elvis Presley. In that cascade of names we refigured the terror, the surging emotion of the previous few days. In all the glib after-assessments of the 1960s, in all the myths and smugness of the media, all the famous quietude of the campuses, all the Dylan-quoting of a new President, it is easy to forget what has been out there to be overcome.

After a long, unmeasured time of eulogies, Mickey Flacks of Santa Barbara arose to remind us that there is a time to gain as there is a time to lose: we should now speak the names of our children. "Charles Wright Flacks." "Mark A.J. Flacks." Parents spoke those names. But this remembrance passed in an appalling rush. There were not nearly so many of those brought to life as those who had lost it. The shock of that discovery, coupled with the shock of the other losses, reverberated long and deeply. Who are "we" who shall overcome?

The final two days were, had to be, emotional anticlimax; the reunion wanted to move toward more definite discussion of political goals, work being done and work to be done. A couple of panel discussions on politics

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now flushed out some few of the differences that had been simmering under the surface. There were dedicated community organizers who believed, as SDS used to say, in "organizing people where they're at"; there were people working in the New American Movement; there were a few self-conscious, defensive Marxist-Leninists. There were some people active in the Mobilization for Survival, a coalition of groups against nuclear bombs and nuclear reactors; there were a few who thought it was distracting or demoralizing for local groups to consider the possibilities of nuclear war. Tom Hayden tried to put many of the strands together, and got a respectful hearing for his lucid presentation on principles of radical transformation. Hayden stressed the Left-scorned values of patriotism, nonviolence and wide reach, and declared that a radical movement without definite leadership is an absurdity. All week, in fact, at the edges of workshops and panels the old slogan about "no leaders" was under fire; it seemed to be generally acknowledged that leadership is not *ipso facto* tyranny. The evident intelligence of the Gang of Six was in this respect exemplary, a good advertisement for the possibility of sensible leadership.

But all in all, political positions were more staked out and suggested than thoroughly debated—there wasn't time for more, and the Gang of Six had wisely decided to emphasize unities over potential divisions. The quite considerable divisions in the American Left are both causes and consequences of its slightness and disorganization, and most of those divisions were lurking in Michigan. It required energy and tact to evade or postpone them. There was a complaint that the hard work of political clarification was being suppressed by the rituals of "love-tyranny and voodoo." The task-minded current activists were probably most frustrated by the brief attention given to current political questions, but they were also the most pleasantly surprised by the force of the process-minded reunion. It promises well for our larger political fortunes that, on this occasion, ideological antagonists could listen well.

As Greg Calvert said for the general will, there were evidently "networks" of common interest—community organizers, academics, feminists, gays, therapists—who should remain in touch and find ways to explore the hitherto unacknowledged bonds. On the last day Calvert proposed that a newsletter be published to carry these discussions forward, and that the Gang of Six be empowered to organize another conference within a year—this one not a reunion, but directed more to the future. There was much sentiment that this next meeting not be limited to the same SDS alumni. Whatever is to follow must be planned with great sensitivity and finesse, but the participants in Michigan seemed to agree there was no point in trying to repeat the spontaneous emotional bonding of the SDS elders, let alone SDS itself.

The motion passed by acclamation. What was also extraordinary was that Calvert credited the inspiration for his proposal to something said that afternoon by one of the first-generation SDSers. That "old guard" had been generally more intellectual, more Eastern, more Jewish—"junior achiever types," somebody said, though actually ambivalent about leadership. It had been displaced in 1966 by a more radical, more militant, more Great Plains and Southwestern "prairie power" group, of which Greg Calvert had been a mainstay. In 1967, a last-ditch attempt by the old guard to rally SDS graduates into a new organizational form had been smothered by, among other things, antagonisms between the old guard and the prairie people. I'd never thought I'd live to see leaders of the two groups proposing something together.

But what does this have to do with mass unemployment or the Equal Rights Amendment? With Anita Bryant or the cruise missile? What does an SDS reunion say to radicals who were never deeply involved in SDS, and why should anyone else care? The mass media have their answers already packaged: they are full of excited chatter about the death of the New Left. *People* (September 12) crows that at the SDS reunion "the old familiar faces were scarce," that the meeting's failure was evident in the fact that five of the Chicago 7 "skipped such a significant reunion" because "they have moved on to other things." Hype feeds on hype. The noisy 1960s were far out, the silent 1970s are far in. The Chicago 7, of course, were named movement celebrities by the Daley regime and the media; only four of the seven were in fact even invited to the SDS reunion, and the two who didn't come had personal reasons. Catch-23: name the leaders, then parade their names as symbolic tokens. *People* went on to trumpet in a headline: "Their Anger Behind Them, the Chicago 7 Declare Peace in the '70s." Likewise, the papers are making John Froines's new Occupational Safety and Health job in the Carter administration into a surrender. And when Mark Rudd, unrelated to the reunion, surfaced from the Weather underground last month, Walter Cronkite chuckled beneficently, as if to say he'd known all along that at 30 one outgrows revolution. Kirkpatrick Sale, by far the best historian of SDS, points out accurately that Rudd was never as much national SDS's man as he was the cameras', but then media-made heroes serve nicely as anti-heroes when the mood changes. None of the myth makers is interested in the community organizers, the minority rights and peace campaigners, the radical doctors and lawyers and carpenters who have been working steadily for years outside what *Newsweek* disingenuously calls "public view," down off those photogenic barricades. The media obituaries are partly expressions of wish, partly sighs of relief, partly arguments against a resurrection.

The fact is that not only are the ideals of the New Left alive, not only do its intellectual projects continue and ramify, but the forms of activity it embodied are widespread. This is why the SDS reunion has, I think, a larger implication. *There may well be more active, even full-time radical organizers at work in the United States today than at the peak of the 1960s.* And the coming of a Democratic administration, with its galvanizing but unfulfilled promises of change, has begun to stoke up (as John Kennedy's did) a new round of direct actions. Since they are not usually seen in relation, let me simply itemize some signs:

The April-May occupation of the Seabrook, N.H. nuclear reactor site by the Clamshell Alliance was the larg-

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est, best-organized, perhaps most participatory nonviolent direct action in American history. (See "The Clamshell Reaction" by Harvey Wasserman, *The Nation,* June 18.) Very little has been reported about the workings of the remarkably persistent Kent State protests of the spring and summer, but I have been told they also combined "affinity group" organization with clear political vision. Eastern media largely missed the major demonstrations last spring at several California campuses (including more than 400 arrests at Santa Cruz) against university complicity in South African investments. The work begun twelve years ago by SDS and civil rights groups against American financial support of the South African dictatorship has been continued manifold under church and lay auspices, with considerable success in convincing American banks to cut those ties. Activists against nuclear weapons and nuclear power have federated for the first time in the Mobilization for Survival that is organizing teach-ins nationwide this fall, and will be staging demonstrations through 1978. Former SNCC activists and others have been organizing demonstrations for full employment and, with the Hawkins-Humphrey bill stalled, there will probably be more. New Left veterans have put together organizer training schools in Chicago and San Francisco. Radical and anti-Meany trade union insurgency is widespread. In all these projects there are continuities between the activists of the 1960s and those of the 1970s.

What is lacking needs little comment. There is precious little deliberate connection among these tendrils, and little of a unifying spirit. SDS's early 1960s slogan, "the issues are interrelated," is always hard to embody in a politcially fragmented, interest-group culture. The ecological, feminist and gay movements are all meeting heavy resistance, and the student activists have still not learned how to reach toward unions and minorities without either submerging their identity or playing at vanguardism. It is a long way from one-at-a-time demonstrations to a common political program, and a long way from program to forms of serious, rooted, cross-class, cross-race, cross-sex, cross-generation organization and leadership that can do right by that program. It is exhausting even to contemplate that prospect. And the world does not wait.

The SDS reunion was not the place to find the roots for that development. By interest and recent experience it was too diverse; by class, by race, by age and 1960s experience, too narrow. It remains to be seen how (if at all) the bonds of collective ritual among one-time intimates can be inserted into the thick, messy, divisive stuff of political work, and what SDS's history has to do with that of anyone else. The many directions taken by old SDSers after 1969—community organizing, professions, countercultural and therapeutic culture, to name only three major strands—are all continuations of the New Left's political identity and culture, but it would be foolhardy to predict that without the old camaraderie they are automatically compatible. Still, it is worth dwelling on the fact that, in Michigan, what began with eyes backward, a *re*-union, came to seem, however incompletely, an intimation. Perhaps this is *one* root of a politics for the 1980s, at least a sign of possibilities.

The *Newsweek* and *People* reporters, after poking uninvited into one reunion meal, made the obligatory snide reference to our "austere radical cuisine." Well, it was no doubt less carcinogenic than the usual expense-account stuff. It was also much praised, lavish and consistently delicious food, cooked by several University of Michigan undergraduates who, as it happened, had been wondering before this job whatever happened to the New Left. They'd felt deserted, even betrayed. They'd believed the media aftermyth: our whole political generation was played out, smashed.

At our last meal, they came out to thank us. The reunion had thrilled them. They'd attended workshops, they'd hung out: they saw not our past but a common present. They treated the old folks to ice cream and a rendition of a Presley song of the 1950s. Later, as each of us was saying where he or she would be heading from the reunion, one of the undergraduate cooks said he would be going home to Ann Arbor—"to revolt." The New Left is over. Long live the New Left. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Good Fiction, Plain and Fancy

GENE LYONS

One of the pleasures of growing up middle class is the increasing freedom maturity seems to confer from the imperatives of the Large Philosophical Questions. Can God make a weight he can't lift? Could Joyce write a book he couldn't read? But a person following the profession of letters cannot hope to avoid such topics altogether, and I find that my last column, together with my reading for this month, have provoked just those sorts of questions one despairs of answering and hopes most to avoid. They are, in order: What Is Fiction For? and How Much Is It Worth? Considering the first—I have no intention of answering it in anything but a negative sense—leads naturally into the second, or at least it does when one has for review a translated novella of 64 pages (introduction and epilogue included) that retails for $90 the copy.

I have at hand letters from two magazine editors. One is from Anne Mollegen Smith, the fiction editor of *Redbook*, the other from Bruce Holsapple, who puts out a little magazine called *Contraband*. Each has a different reason for being annoyed with something I have written. Ms. Smith, in the course of commenting interestingly on the fiction of Tim O'Brien, which she has edited and published and I have reviewed here, wonders why I was so surprised that quality work had appeared in her magazine, as I had put it, "of all places." Mr. Holsapple accuses me of talking through my hat on the subject of little magazines, about which he thinks I know next to nothing. What makes their letters interesting from my point of view is the light each sheds on the other. For Ms. Smith is devoting her professional life to something Mr. Holsapple declares to be an impossibility: locating and printing high quality short stories that are also "commercial."

Specifically Mr. Holsapple is offended by my remarks consequent to Stephen Minot's article in *North American Review* to the general effect that there are far too many small literary magazines, that most are of dubious or no quality, that hardly anyone, not even the people who submit stories and poems to them, ever reads them, and that the net effect upon American literary culture is harmful. In passing I had borrowed Minot's terminology to speak of persons editing magazines without readers as "hobbyists," and compared the achieving of public reputation as an author to gaining fame as a baseball player—both activities, it seems to me, requiring a combination of native gifts and acquired skills that makes them suitable for analogy. I said I thought it one thing to observe that recognition in either field tended to be somewhat arbitrary, but quite another to insist that the best practitioners are all unknowns. To this Holsapple replied:

> Your comparison of an exceptional poet to a professional baseball player is stupid; and literature is not a sport or a hobby . . . it is insulting that you don't see the necessities we face. Your idea of a national forum, or publication, for our best writers is obsolete. Publishers who can command national attention today, with the exception of presses like Capra, Black Sparrow and City Lights, also have no relation to literature. . . . What Small Press does, with the aid of grants lately, is to put publication into the hands of writers, and to sustain a literature there is no popular audience for. It is an obligation. . . . The world is obviously enriched by the literary arts. It can afford to pay attention. If your idea of growing up means to commercialize, I suggest you take another dive into *The Deep*.

Now there is a good deal to be said in response to this letter, but as I have said much of it before, I should like to concentrate upon two aspects, both of them relative to the recent publication of Ms. Smith's mass-market anthology, *Redbook's Famous Fiction*, now available in the vicinity of the checkout counter at supermarkets all over the country. Obviously literature is not a sport. But my dictionary defines a "hobby" as: "an occupation, activity, or interest . . . engaged in primarily for pleasure; a pastime." Clearly that is not all it is; most of us who are passionate about it prefer our bookishness to have greater consequence in the scheme of things than "stamp collecting or gardening," the activities given in the dictionary as specific examples of hobbies and omitted by my tactical ellipsis.

But matters have not always been so: an 18th- or 19th-century novelist could, paradoxically enough, characterize someone as a bit of a trifler by including among his or her qualities a fondness for novel reading. As a popular art form, prose fiction has been subject to attack from aristocrats and would-be noblemen of taste, in which number Mr. Holsapple no doubt includes himself. Nor has the desire on the part of a literary man to improve himself socially or financially ever served as a deterrent to such assaults on the public taste. Particularly in America one gains the respect of a substantial proportion of the middle-class book buyers by means of lampooning its entertainments. How else can one explain the career of Gore Vidal, author of *Myra Breckenridge* and disdainer of the best-selling novel? My point, a simple one, is this: unless the habit of reading imaginative writing begins in pleasure, it ends nowhere. Probably the most damaging thing about the way books are talked about in American classrooms for example, is that so many teachers are convinced that the love of books begins in moral duty and ends with the ferreting out of maxims for the general improvement of mankind.

Editor Smith's concerns are less exalted. In selecting fiction to appear in *Redbook* she must try to find work that will attract an audience of young women 18 to 34 to buy the magazine, thus raising its circulation among this target group, and justifying the higher advertising rates, which in the long run help to turn higher profits for the Redbook Publishing Company, and for the conglomerate which owns it. To entice a young woman into choosing *Redbook* over *Good Housekeeping* or, heaven protect us, *People*, Smith must offer her something she wants by way of entertainment. According to contemporary theory, then, and most surely by editor Holsapple's lights, such priorities can result in the publication of little more than vapid trifles. Right? Wrong. In fact, and almost without exception, the stories and novellas contained in *Redbook's Famous Fiction* are good, well-crafted, readable and generally affecting pieces of work. If there is not a work of rare genius among the twenty-eight stories included—although more than a

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Gene Lyons contributes a monthly column to The Nation.

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few show considerable skill and promise —neither is there any lumpish, pretentious hack work of the sort that one encounters all too often in publications ostensibly dedicated to higher aims and a more sophisticated audience. The market system, one is tempted to observe, seems at first glance to work at least as well as the buddy system.

To be sure there is a certain delimitation of subject matter, and in general the narrative strategies employed may be described as conventional. Fully fifteen of the titles, by my count, are devoted to young women in and out of love and marriage. Nor is the view given of those subjects uniformly cheerful and uplifting. Some, like Lynda Schor's "I'm Really Dead," or Rosellen Brown's "How to Win," could be described as harrowing. The latter, which deals with the mother of a hyperactive child, touches chords too often unheard in much contemporary fiction. Exactly how so many educated Americans have come to feel that the sane and ordinary concerns of their private lives are not worth the examining is a topic far too ambitious for a book review, but one which an open-minded reading of *Redbook's Famous Fiction*, which assumes the opposite, is likely to provoke.

Not all of the stories are so commonplace, however. "The Beautiful View" by Louise Blecher Rose was voted their favorite story of 1973 by *Redbook*'s readers and was a finalist in the 1974 National Magazine Award for Fiction. It deals with a fat, neurotic woman whose "normal, happily married" best friend may or may not be dying from cancer. Nita Regnier's novella "An Opening of Doors" concerns the return to affective life of a young Frenchwoman who survives the death camp at Ravensbruck. Tim O'Brien's story is about Vietnam and is not uplifting. Byrd Baylor's "A Faint Glow Under the Ashes" attempts to illuminate the life of a Papago Indian family on welfare in an Arizona city. The houses of Mexicans or Yaqui Indians, one learns, are surrounded by flowers and ferns: "Only Papago Indians grow out of a bare dirt yard. Maybe a clump of corn around by the back door. But almost never these masses of leaves and flowers. More often you'll see a little heap of pretty rocks, blue copper ore or ancient grinding stones—*manos* and *metates* from the reservation. Here a yard may be raked or swept for special days. A Papago admires an area swept flat and hard." Such small discoveries constitute the pleasures of fiction for ordinary readers. Without ordinary readers and such "ordinary" fiction as *Redbook* customarily publishes, moreover, truly extraordinary writers have neither a tradition to work within or against, nor readers to support them. Neither do I wish to seem a defender of mediocrity. The general standard in *Redbook*'s anthology is well above that of what a novelist friend of mine calls "the divine Irvings" and their aesthetic brethren who make seasonal runs at the best-seller lists. Probably there are subjects and kinds of writing that Ms. Smith will not touch: in that *Redbook* is like every other magazine, big and little. But what she does take is commendable. In the contributor's notes Rosellen Brown, herself no stranger to little magazines, tells about a friend and neighbor who happened upon her *Redbook* story in the doctor's office, read it because the drawing accompanying it reminded her of her own little boy, and cried, all without realizing until several months later that she knew the author: "her response was the essence, for me, of what I hope for when I write: to make friends of strangers and strangers of friends, by saying for them some of the things they will never get to say." If this is commercialism, and it is, Holsapple and his like-minded colleagues would do well to sit down and try to say exactly what special values inhere to *their* literature that the rest of us should feel obliged to pay for it with our taxes.

For a bibliophile, rare book dealer and part-time publisher like W. Thomas Taylor of Austin, Texas, the last twenty years have brought about an increasingly paradoxical and sad situation. For at the same time that the High-Church criticism centered in university English departments sought to sanctify literature, the huge growth of those same institutions, together with the "paperback revolution" has not only brought cheap editions of classic works within the economic range of Everykid but has also succeeded in making books into cheap utilitarian objects. The printing and collecting of fine editions is now seen as vaguely shameful, much as a taste for pornography used to be. Wallace Stevens said that "Poetry/ Exceeding music must take the place/ Of empty heaven and its hymns," as clear a statement of the contemporary credo as one is likely to find. If you want a copy of the hymnal you can buy it for a couple of dollars, but if you read it more than twice the pages are likely to fall out and you will have to get another. Nor are trade hardback editions well enough made to last very long without deterioration. The art of bookmaking, or trade if you prefer, is one of those that is passing out of existence. To the extent that it survives at all it is mainly a phenomenon of the small press.

Mr. Taylor is a man who knows his own mind. Several years ago, while an undergraduate at the University of Texas, he grew so disgusted with a pedant's autopsy of Gerard Manley Hopkins that he left the classroom, walked directly to the Registrar's office, and withdrew formally, and he says forever, from Higher Education. In the course of pursuing the rare book dealership he subsequently established, Taylor came to know John Fowles, whose work he greatly admires, and who is also an antiquarian book lover of sorts. In the epilogue to *Ourika*, the novella Fowles has translated from the French and Taylor has published, Fowles laments the disappearance from Britain and America of the second-hand bookshop, the sort of place where treasures might lie promiscuously next to trash, establishments rapidly losing ground to the collectivized efficiency of the omnivorous research libraries of universities.

It was in such a bookshop that Fowles first stumbled upon *Ourika*, first published in Paris in 1824, and designated by him as the first known attempt by a white writer to enter a black mind. His immediate conviction, Fowles says, was that he had stumbled upon a minor classic, a feeling that has grown in him over the years, to the point that he felt he ought to do a translation. The difficulty with a work of such length, however, is obvious: Fowles wanted to do more with the novella than bury it in a magazine or anthology, as its qualities are subtle enough to be lost in such a format. But it is too short and too specialized in appeal to make a trade book. The format that he and Taylor have settled upon, a Morocco bound large page (approximately 7½ x 10 in.) edition on handmade paper, is a handsome one, and seems exactly appropriate to the kind of book *Ourika* is. Five hundred copies were printed at the Bird & Bull Press, bound by Gray Parrot at Hancock, Maine and signed by Fowles. The retail price per copy, as I have indicated above, is $90.

To produce 500 copies, Taylor says, has cost him $20,000, not counting his own or his secretary's time. Rapid calculation shows that his markup is about 100 per cent over cost, compared to the publishing industry's usual 500 per cent. "The truth is," he continues "that it has become very difficult to make a profit on a handmade book, and most

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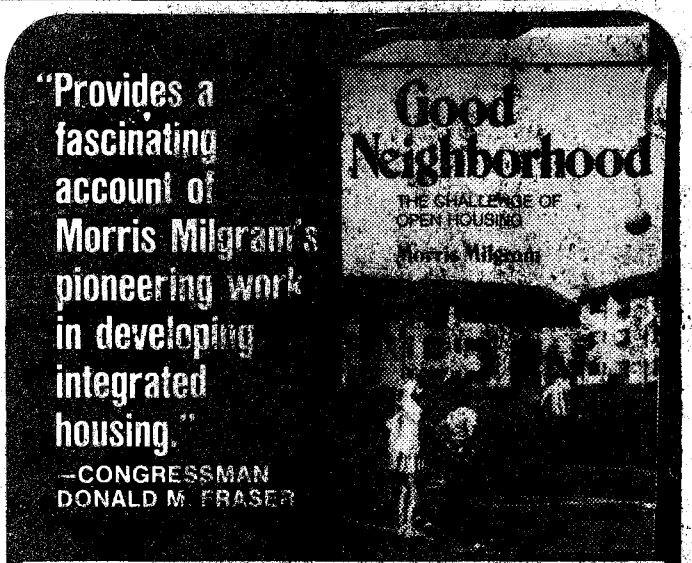
producers and publishers of such books don't do it for a profit. Some are subsidized by universities, some by the National Endowment for the Arts and some by other businesses, not bookselling business for example. [illegible] woman who would think [illegible] spending $50 on a pair of shoes [illegible] think it ludicrous to spend the same on a fine book, although the shoes will last a year, the book 500 years. A man might spend $100 on a meal for friends, but not on a book. I think that is the last generation that will see a really good book produced." This is an irony I have discussed earlier in relation to the general public refusal to support literary magazines.

Is *Ourika* itself intrinsically worth the loving care its publisher and translator have given it? A difficult question and one not likely to be answered to the satisfaction of prospective buyers. Like it or not, most persons who will spring that much for a book they have not read will be collectors rather than readers of fine books or of John Fowles. Either that or they won't be persons at all [illegible] libraries. That is the reason I have put off for so long discussing *Ourika* for fiction. Never having myself worn a pair of $50 shoes or paid $100 for a meal, perhaps I should be disqualified in any case.

The novella is the creation of Claire de Durfort, Duchess of Duras, born in 1779, survivor of the Revolution and passionate friend to Chateaubriand in what Fowles calls "one of those physically unconsummated but intellectually passionate *liaisons* for which the race has such a special gift." The idea of writing about a black female who is raised and educated in the aristocratic society of her time almost as a kind of house pet seems to have occurred to the Duchess, according to Fowles, as her way of dealing with the illicitness and loneliness of her [illegible] absence and infidelity. "I am certain," Fowles writes, "one reason why she was able to enter a black mind was that she saw in that situation a symbolic correlative of whatever in her own [illegible] and beliefs had always [illegible] from entering into a full relationship with Chateaubriand."

The tale is framed by a young doctor, who tells of visiting a dying nun in the Faubourg Saint-Jacques. The nun is black and shows "every sign of having suffered from prolonged and acute melancholia," now transformed to happiness by religious faith, she tells him. On succeeding visits the doctor befriends the woman, who agrees to tell her life story, which makes up the body of the text. It seems that she was taken from Senegal as a baby and placed into the household of Mme. de B., who educates her almost as she would a child of her own. "Her fondness for me," she says, "the kind of life I was leading, everything prolonged my mistaken view of existence and made my blindness natural." But the idyll, as one might expect, is short-lived. One afternoon she accidentally overhears a conversation about her between her mistress and a "certain marquise, a bleakly practical lady with an incisive mind, and frank to the point of dryness." When the marquise asks after Ourika's future, the girl hears her mistress confess that "I see the poor girl alone, always alone in the world." She realizes the extent of her plight even as the marquise denounces "evils that arise from deliberately upsetting the natural order of things. Ourika has flouted her natural destiny. She has entered society without its permission. It will have its revenge."

The marquise is correct, as Ourika not only falls into the bleakest kind of romantic despair but complicates her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predicament by conceiving a hopeless passion for Mme. de B.'s son, who remains both oblivious and brotherly. "I needed what I loved and it had never crossed my mind that what I loved did not need me in return." Ourika falls into mingled resentment and self-hatred: "There is something humiliating in not knowing how to tolerate the inevitable." She dresses in veils and removes her mirrors in an attempt to render herself invisible. After the object of her devotion marries she finds religion, enters the convent and dies ostensibly happy, a figure contrivance as unconvincing and ultimately irrelevant to the story's thrust as it must have been to its creator. As Fowles comments in his convincingly thoughtful epilogue: "Ourika is a striking case of a fictional character mutinying against the writer. . . . The love of freedom, of justice, keeps seeping from behind the mask of reaction. The political 'common sense' is trumped by a much deeper human pity." Fowles sees in this self-contradiction a triumph for the ideas of the French Revolution, the Romantic Movement and "the novel form, whose only true function, beyond amusement, must always be to create a greater sense of personal freedom in both writer and reader."

Blindness and invisibility, self-hatred and muffled rage, a character inwardly divided against herself and the society that has caused the division, all of that within less than 12,000 often epigrammatic words from what Fowles calls "the heart of the unlikely woman who dared to think black in the whitest of all white worlds." Who is to say what such a thing is worth? At the very least we ought to be grateful to Fowles and Taylor for bringing it to our attention and lavishing such care upon its production. All the rest is bookkeeping. □

A Separate Peace

UNION DUES. *By John Sayles. Atlantic-Little, Brown and Co. 385 pp. $9.95.*

EDWARD McCONVILLE

John Sayles's *Union Dues* is a disturbingly well-written novel. I'll begin by praising the book's obvious merits, before I deal with what disturbs me so much about it.

The plot in itself should guarantee reasonable interest. A miner's son, Hobie McNatt, runs away from his home in Pocahontas West Virginia coal country, in search (he thinks) of his older brother Dan, a burnt-out Vietnam veteran. He comes to Boston where he falls in with one of the "revolutionary collectives" that proliferated during the late 1960s. His father, Hunter McNatt, reluctantly leaves his buddies in Joseph Yablonski's insurgency against the United Mine Workers' Boyle machine to look for his son in the Brave New World of the Boston-Cambridge axis circa 1968-69: a good mix of materials—working-class hero meets the New Left.

Fortunately, Sayles is too serious and skillful a writer to succumb to the temptations of the facile and topical. He manages to create a compelling American tragedy, the dissolution of a family, and then to extend it to our nation's desperate search for lasting roots and personal ties. This theme is suggested on the book's first page with the description of a strip-mined hillside Hobie sees on his way out of town: "The trees were all gray up by the dozer-scraped highwall, tilted at crazy angles with their roots poking out into space." As the book continues, the theme takes root and spreads.

If Hobie has gone to Boston in search of connections closer to his actual identity than the dead-end existence of an Appalachian mining town, his father feels violently uprooted when he leaves the mountains. Hunter adds a visceral poignancy to the old concept of anomie. When apprised of the odds against finding his son in a city the size of Boston, he responds that,

> "You have to do what you can. Even if it looks like there isn't much hope." The words sounded right but Hunter wasn't sure how much he still believed them. He had always acted that way, with Molly being sick, in the mine, in the war, and it seemed the only right way to be. But up here—things got complicated. Fuzzy. You didn't know exactly where to aim yourself.

Sayles, a Williams graduate who has worked at several blue-collar jobs, has written a realistic novel of working-class life. He understands the petty but intensely personal politics of the shop floor and the union local. He captures the physical sensations of moderately hard menial labor and he has an uncanny ear for the dialogue of diverse working-class subcultures: the raillery of Appalachian coal miners at their lunch hole, the oaths and expostulations of Italian meatpackers in the mother tongue, the cursing of cops in Boston, and the authentic barroom oratory of a grandiloquent old Irish ward heeler.

Hunter McNatt is a brilliantly wrought character, but Sayles is considerably less kind to the middle-class radicals who appear in his narrative. He captures their Movement jargon and their presumptions in devastating dialogue. These student revolutionaries are more concerned with keeping their abstract concept of revolution pure than they are with the welfare of the working people whose cause they champion. When warned that a strike of illegal aliens she is planning will result in their deportation, one revolutionary answers with a smile, "Right. And when they see who's putting them on the boat, they'll know who their real enemy is. So that when they get home they'll probably join the Tupamaros." These bourgeois radicals are only too happy to let workers' suffering increase if that is the price of "raising their consciousness." Long-range, structural change always has a way of sounding more logical and noble than "Band-Aid reforms," but, as Harry Hopkins was fond of reminding Depression-era social engineers, "People don't eat in the long run."

No one who was involved in the political activism of the 1960s will read this book without feeling a twinge of embarrassed nostalgia. The professional revolutionaries' blatant manipulation of their working-class "clients" is at once repulsive and realistic, and their attempts to relate to working people are often downright ludicrous. Sayles is good at this sort of satire, but the book's real strength lies in its portrayal of working-class life. *Union Dues* is, quite simply, the best book of its kind since Harvey Swados's *On the Line*. In many ways it is better than Swados's classic novel of the men of the assembly line. Its scope is much broader, Sayles has a better developed sense of humor and irony and, finally, *Union Dues* is more concrete and less analytical, relying more on incident and dialogue and less on an omniscient narrator to tell its story.

Nevertheless there is something deeply disturbing about this book, a misleading perspective it conveys to its readers. Literary critics generally argue that a novel should not be judged by its social "message," if indeed it is uncouth enough to have one. But Sayles's book, whether intentionally or not, bears an unmistakable message about political

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people and the very nature of political involvement.

I raise the question of intention because Sayles himself is not entirely judgmental toward most of the middle-class radicals he portrays. A songfest scene shows them able to laugh at their own political and moral pretensions, and an examination of one radical couple's motivations seems to absolve many of the book's New Left characters of insincerity and bad faith.

But these qualifications will be lost on many readers. Early reviews have fastened almost exclusively on the author's compelling indictment of the Left life styles and politics of the period; one was gleefully titled "Exposing the Sixties."

Exposing the 1960s has become a very fashionable activity in the last few years. It is easy to partronize our former selves, to satirize the follies of our youth, the political naiveté and absurd posturing of the New Left. But there are still a number of former student radicals we never read about in the media, the hard core which has remained politically active, albeit in less dramatic fashion, through the "apathetic" 1970s. They sense the shortcomings of their 1960s politics as surely as Sayles, yet have not rejected their entire activist experience out of hand.

Sayles might argue that he is aware of the existence of such people, but that he was merely trying to capture the essence of a particular period in the life of our generation, and that it is not really his job as a novelist to trace the generation's development up to the present moment. But the problem with his book goes deeper than that.

In the eternal tension between the private and the public, the personal and the political, Sayles opts entirely for the private and the personal. He begins with the valid point that people are generally at their most effective when acting on behalf of people they know intimately, rather than for abstract ideas, causes, or faceless classes of people. Hunter joins the anti-Boyle movement not primarily out of concern for his fellow miners but for his son, whom he expects to join him in the mines. But when Hobie runs away, the rank-and-file insurgency "wasn't enough" for Hunter anymore. "There has to be something in it for me, something personal," he tells a fellow miner, "or it's not worth staying for. With Hobie gone I'd feel like an outsider, my heart just wouldn't be in it." When he is forced to recognize that his family is broken up beyond his power to bring it back together, Hunter forges new family ties with a South Boston woman and her children. Sayles's vision of apolitical bliss, as embodied in their new relationship, is appealing and persuasive, but also a bit deceptive.

Most people who have been able to maintain lifelong commitments to social change are people who have found a workable balance in their lives between their personal and political needs. In ignoring the need for such a balance, in implicitly but unmistakably counseling a return to privatism, Sayles is just as narrow as the most extreme as the "political hangers" of the 1960s who preached the total denial of one's personal feelings in the service of impersonal ideological goals.

The Poetry of M.L. Rosenthal (II)

EMILE CAPOUYA

This is Part II of an essay, the first section of which appeared in The Nation *of October 1.*

Let us make a comparison of moral energies. Remembering those lines of Rosenthal I have called splendid, let us consider two poems that avoid splendor on principle, because their occasions would be destroyed were splendor admitted. First,

The Intruders

A man came from a certain far place (downstairs),
Saying that the people there were dying.
The man was wearing the shoes of that place
And spoke in the accent of one that lived there;
But his shoes were torn and covered with mud,
And the man was unshaven.

Now I was sitting in my room full of charts,
Staring from my window observing my flies,
And filing my nail-files.
And here was this man, without credentials,
Breathing in my face, his hands on my desktop—
Moreover, he had forgotten to remove his hat.

I put a bullet through his head.

Now here's the point: his countrymen lately
Keep setting fire to my house. One, in fact,
Who should know better (we just gave him amnesty,
After seven years in prison for marrying
My bastard daughter), touched a match to my hair
Only this morning after serving the coffee.

One's always having one's personal affairs intruded on.

These lines are an anatomy, and a good likeness, of the soul of any recent American President—or of any Russian premier, to confine ourselves to the "representative men" of two nations only. The verses are an example of the journalistic impulse operating at so high a level that they amount to history.

But not to poetry. Why not? Because their real voice is not that of the murderous dumb cluck who says "I" in them. It is the voice of Thersites, whose character the author has adopted in order to wreak a slave's revenge upon his masters. All the ills of these successful verses—indeed, their success—follow from that unfortunate disguise. Free men do not speak so. To be free we must begin to speak otherwise. When Rosenthal speaks as a poet he is free, and liberates him who is within reach of his voice.

The first stanza is a burlesque of Yeats—the first line, in fact, a conflation of the first lines of "Cuchulain's Fight with the Sea" and "A Dream of Death." And the lampoon proceeds through the verse, employing Yeats's tone for uses that Yeats would not descend to. If the reader or listener recognizes the travesty, he is party to a learned joke. If not, tough. So this enterprise begins with mildly bad manners. Anyway the lines are funny and disturbing—worse luck. Among Rosenthal's talents is the talent for poetic self-destruction.

With "Now I was sitting in my room full of charts," the lines sing, banally, of banality. A very palpable hit. When we were at last privileged to hear Richard Nixon's recorded table-talk, what did we hear but this "filing my nail-files" and "credentials"?

Next comes official murder.

Next the customary plea for understanding—of the murderer, of course, and put forward by him.

And finally, an idea with which recent history has made us familiar, that

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the great man conceives the public business to be his personal business and nobody's business.

How can one be curmudgeonly enough to scold about lines that hold as much wit and insight as these? Because, as Rosenthal writes in another place,

> *In the planet where I come from, stranger,*
> *The matter to hand is of other things.*
> ("Liston Cows Patterson and Knocks Him Silly," *Blue Boy on Skates.*)

To ascend to those other things takes a moral impetus that is not to be found in "The Intruders," in which we laugh, cravenly, at a brute.

Again,

> The Ideal Poet
>
> *The ideal poet's tall and gaunt,*
> *agreed.*
> *But is that ideal poet*
> *syphilitic too?*
> *Or is he pure and rosy-cheeked? (Cries*
> *Of: "Syphilitic!" "No! pure and rosy-cheeked!"*
> *I say*
> *he's neither, or a bit of both:*
> *Healthy, yet impure;*
> *pure, yet mottled;*
> *un-*
> *mottled, yet speckled. Ra-hosy-cheeked*
> *But with jee-yust*
> *the slee-ightest touch*
> *Of the old (as I was saying) spirochete.*
> *Bring on*
> *The penicillin, Doc,*
> *The Muse*
> *Is still a whore for a' that, an' a' that.*

That is very good fooling, no less funny because it makes vaudeville out of questions of aesthetics and morals that have in the past supported monuments of solemnity on the order of Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*. And the very last line, which is another learned joke, is perfectly acceptable. For one thing, it isn't that learned. The reader who doesn't recognize Burns's "A Man's a Man for a' That" probably does not know enough English verse to get much good of any—for the art is one only to him who is sufficiently habituated; in every art, what are improperly called fine points are self-evident to the experienced and do not exist for the untutored. Which is to say that the art itself does not exist for the untutored. As far as I know, that rule is universal, and applies equally to boxing, chess, or poetry.

Yet, what does the line lifted from Burns say here? Or first, what did "for a' that and a' that" mean in Burns's poem? It said that men have a value independent of the accidents of privilege or poverty. Affirmations of the kind, common coin of the Enlightenment, helped create that value by making us sensible of it, so that we grew for a time to resemble that conception of ourselves. There have been powerful counter-currents since, but they have not entirely erased the effects of such doctrine. But we're working at it. To what use does Rosenthal put the evocation? Why, he makes a witticism. Would he murder his grandmother for the sake of the jest? No. Only his patrimony. Remark how archaisms and literary references, always implicit juxtapositions of past and present, either advance the poetic enterprise or else depart in the [illegible] enterprise, generally [illegible] ultimately self-gratulatory and self-deluding. So that it is tonic to remember

> *Stress[illegible] the moral man*
> *Can [illegible] death waiting:*
> *I long [illegible] pace your honored*
> *stones*
> *Dream on the faces of your living*
> *throngs.*

"Long to," "pace," "dream on"—these are the obvious archaisms, the last possibly an invention on the pattern of "to think on," or "to muse on." But more telling than these three words is the unmistakably archaic spirit of the lines, a

social policy

"New Approaches to Assessing Learning"

September/October 1977

More money has been spent on education in the past decade than ever before, but children do not seem to be learning better. Moreover, the disreputability of IQ testing has led to confusion about what are appropriate assessment instruments. New modes of assessment arise which are modeled after individual development, attuned to different styles of learning at different paces. The variety of approaches discussed in this issue of Social Policy suggest the breadth of possibility.

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nobility of sentiment not available to us in our current language. To attain to that nobility, the poet had to make a new literary speech that renews the qualities of an antique idiom. That new speech rescues what is left of our hope, and is modern as the speech of the greater part of present-day verse can never be. The current speech is chiefly the body of this death; we are alive only insofar as we hold to intimations of nobility that current speech exists to deny. Apollinaire wrote, in a poem that calls the airplane fellow to the hummingbird—so hard he worked to assimilate the experience of industrialization—wrote nevertheless in that poem, "The only modern man in Europe is you, Pope Pius X." He may possibly have had the wrong man, but he had the right idea.

But what are these retrograde notions? What is this jumped-up gentility, at enmity with the present, and showing its vulgarity in its nostalgia for a past that never was? Is the man really opposed to universal suffrage and antibiotics? Does he want women to die of puerperal fever and infants of membranous croup? No. Not really. Not at all. The past was no good place for me and my kind. We were voiceless then. But having found a voice, I am not going to strain it shouting hurray for the degradation of the democratic dogma. I'll save it for democracy itself, the notion that gave me and my kind the gift of speech. Democracy is the ennoblement of each, first in his own eyes, then in the eyes of all. Insofar as we have not yet established that vision in this world, I feel entitled to complain. Those who are comfortable with the present state of affairs, or those who despair of improving it—it is possible to be active in good causes and despair of improving it—will be annoyed. But poetry is not Philistine, nor inane through hopelessness. Its business is always to put us in mind of the project of humanizing ourselves, the ideal whose energy transformed the Old World in the light of that world's best values. That epic energy is now nearly spent, and nearly spent is our faith in those values. But they are peculiarly our values, and when they are not incarnate in our art we have next to no values at all. If we look around us, is that not what we see?

Or perhaps the reader thinks that Holy Joe is after abolishing cakes and ale. If he does, he hasn't caught the flavor of my madness—a preference for the enfranchisement of the race is, statistically speaking, a form of madness. No, I like jokes. As Pirandello's magistrate says, grimly, "Can't you see I'm smiling?" The thing of it is, I don't like the jokes to be always at our expense: governments, wars (if that is not redundant), and art whose function it is to distract us from paying attention to our spiritual death.

My madness has its seasons. It subsides, and I am sweet-tempered and biddable as the next man. But it flared up when I read that Solzhenitsyn, being asked to smile for the newspaper camera, refused to smile, saying, "An author should look serious when being photographed." It would seem that he thinks he is somebody. That encouraged the same delusion in me, and an ambition to see all my fellows grave in front of the camera. Or if joyous, joyous, and not smirking.

In the planet where I come from, stranger,
The matter to hand is of other things.

MUSIC

DAVID HAMILTON

At the beginning of Thea Musgrave's *The Voice of Ariadne*, which was given its American première by the New York City Opera on September 30, one feared that this might be yet another contemporary opera in which the music served only as background—another play distended but not enhanced. Musgrave's orchestral language, developed to considerable effectiveness in a series of concerted works during the late 1960s (most of them available on records), relies heavily on instrumental commonplaces—tremolos and trills, scales, repeated notes—and at first what one heard from the chamber orchestra in the pit appeared to be a muted, rather undifferentiated form of what had been exploited so dramatically in those earlier works.

But the composer's mastery of her language gradually begins to tell, as does her mastery of vocal writing, which the earlier works had not revealed. Harmonic tensions are well controlled, significant motivic ideas impress themselves firmly on the ear, distinctive colors are conjured from the limited ensemble, and the alternation of free with rhythmically strict writing is cannily matched to the progress of the drama—a progress that is, however, at times somewhat more fitful than one might wish. By the third act, everything is working well, on stage and in the pit, and its two scenes rise to genuine eloquence before fading out in a lambent, gently rocking duet for the two protagonists.

According to the title page, Amalia Elguera's libretto for *The Voice of Ariadne* is "based on 'The Last of the Valerii' by Henry James," but I think "suggested by" would be a more accurate formulation, since an almost entirely new superstructure has been erected upon its original situation. The James story, first published in 1874, tells of a Roman Count and his American heiress wife, on the grounds of whose villa is discovered an antique statue of Juno; the Count is bewitched by the goddess, and only when the statue is reburied does he return to his wife. Elguera has populated this tale with a conspicuously symmetrical array of characters, mostly invented. The Count and the Countess don't really love each other, but each is in love with what he and she wish the other to be. Each is also the object of other affections: the Count from Marchesa Bianca Bianchi, a wily Italian lady; the Countess from her compatriot, the quiet, retiring Mr. Lamb. A further couple comprises a wealthy older American lady, Mrs. Tracy, and a rather foolish Italian named Baldovino, who pursues her with indifferent success. (That these relationships involve the characteristic Jamesian motive of the "international situation" is misleading, for it in fact plays no significant role in the opera, as it also did not in the story.) Finally, there are two servants, a priestlike gardener who still believes in the ancient gods and his more modern-minded assistant.

What is unearthed, in the opera, is merely the pedestal belonging to a statue of Ariadne, and the Count imagines himself to be hearing her voice, calling to Theseus who deserted her. (The voice is strikingly realized on a tape, made by the composer in collaboration with Richard Rodney Bennett, as a dual voice washed in the sounds of the sea.) Obsessed by the image of the deserted princess, the Count ignores his wife, thereby putting her in Ariadne's predicament; finally, when she offers her love freely, without requiring any return from him, he comes to realize that it was his wife he loved after all.

In both structure and verbiage, the libretto's adumbration of this central theme leaves something to be desired. Elguera's language tends toward what our fathers used to call "highfalutin," without achieving either elegance or eloquence, and much of the second act, devoted to Iago-like machinations on the part of the Marchesa, seems fundamentally irrelevant. (Her opposite num-

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ber, Mr. Lamb, makes his single significant intervention much more touchingly and economically in the third act, when he preaches to the Countess of "a love that asks for nothing, nothing except the loved one's joy.") It is difficult to escape the impression that much of this is really there to extend to an act's length the necessary episode in which the Count publicly ignores his wife. Even the inventiveness of the music—and a more than capable performance of the Marchesa by Sandra Walker, if a shade too much modeled on Angela Lansbury—doesn't keep one from feeling that the central matter has been in abeyance too long, though at act's end a strong *scena* for the abandoned Countess brings us back to the main thread.

A general failure on the part of director Colin Graham to differentiate the Italian characters from the American ones somehow diminished the plausibility of the City Opera's production, which was in most other ways admirable. The composer conducted with a sure sense of shape and climax, and the cast was exemplary in its dedication to verbal clarity, true pitches, and sensitive molding of phrases and lines. I particularly admired Cynthia Clarey, who learned the part of the Countess on very short notice. She played on her silvery soprano with the precision of an instrumentalist, equally adept at spinning lyrical lines and hurling out forceful, jagged phrases with absolute security and intensity; equally proficient at embodying the poised heiress and the forsaken woman. I look forward to hearing her again, and often.

As Count Marco Valerio, David Holloway also sang strongly, though he looked every inch an American. Frances Bible contributed an amusing character study as Mrs. Tracy, Thomas Jamerson a subdued and telling one as Mr. Lamb. David Griffiths sang Baldovino with some power and accuracy, but I felt him miscast—I read the part as intended for a character tenor, and a man smaller than the object of his fatuous passion; Griffiths overbore it both vocally and physically. Carl Toms's sets were evocative, if a bit cluttered and flimsy (when the Countess pounded on an ostensibly solid door, it quailed), and by the second performance Ken Billington's lighting had settled down to professional smoothness.

First performed at the 1974 Aldeburgh Festival and dedicated to Benjamin Britten, *The Voice of Ariadne* stands clearly within one of the few established traditions of contemporary opera, and upholds it worthily and distinctively (Britten's church parables are in various ways its most direct ancestors). Like Britten's *Albert Herring* and *The Turn of the Screw*, it would probably come across even more strongly in a smaller auditorium than the New York State Theatre, and I strongly commend it to the attention of capable companies in appropriate settings. (There will be two further performances in New York, on October 19 and 26, and one during the company's visit to Los Angeles.)

I haven't left myself much space to enumerate the pleasures of the City Opera's new production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, but at least the merits of the work itself don't require elaborate praise. Happily, it is sung in English (less happily, in the occasionally wrongheaded Martin translation), and this spares the director any compulsion to divert an uncomprehending audience by all manner of dumb show and sight gags. John Copley has put together a clean, sensible and witty production (at a considerable remove from the *Figaro noir* of Jean-Pierre Ponnelle recently shown on television—though that was not without its elegant subtleties), built around two of the company's best young singers, Catherine Malfitano (Susanna) and Samuel Ramey (Figaro). Again, nearly everybody worked successfully to get the text over; Ramey, in fact, may well be the best thing that's happened to sung English since Ethel Merman. Some of Julius Rudel's tempos were unconventional without being convincing (a slowish "*Voi che sapete*" worked, a very slow "*Deh vieni, non tardar*" did not, despite Miss Malfitano's security and charm), but the totality of the evening's experience came excitingly closer to what da Ponte and Mozart had in mind than anything we have seen in these parts for many years. □

Film Festival II / Harold Clurman

I was unable to penetrate the thicket of symbols in Werner Herzog's *Heart of Glass*; I appreciated the factual simplicity of his "short" *La Soufrière*. It is about a volcano by that name in Guadeloupe. Seismologists predict an eruption that will soon destroy everything and everyone in the place. The inhabitants all leave, except for one man, an elderly black, who is prepared to accept whatever is fated. He betrays no fear. We all die anyway, he says. He is calm enough to sing a folk ditty in the midst of the desolate town where only small animals have remained, along with the director and his camera crew who have come to investigate the territory and question the lone man. The expected convulsion of nature does not take place. One cannot be sure whether the film is the record of an actual occurrence or an invention. The symbolism requires no comment: it is clear enough.

The Man Who Loved Women is a man attracted to virtually all women—especially those with pretty ankles and nice voices—but *loves none*. François Truffaut, as director and writer, in a scene in a doctor's office where the man has come because his loves have caused him to contract gonorrhea is shrewd enough to make the point. The magnetic effect the entrance of an attractive female makes on the man while he is lying on his hospital bed after an automobile accident causes his death. A host of women—and no one else—attend his funeral.

There are some funny moments but one is not sure whether Truffaut means to be ironically critical of such a lover or merely wishes to entertain us with the jokes of the situation. Except for a brief episode here and there, I was only feebly amused because I found the man a bore, his erotic drive bogus, and because Charles Denner plays him without charm. I felt that only equally uninteresting women would fall for him. This is not to say that the actresses involved, Brigitte Fossey, Nelly Borgeaud and the others, are personally as unappealing as he.

Complimentary things may be said of *Roseland* (photographed in and around the 52nd Street dance hall) because James Ivory is a director whose pictures always reveal a tenderness for lonely people and forbearance for weakness. This was the quality that made his *Shakespeare Wallah* and *Autobiography of a Princess* endearing. For this he owes much to the screenplays of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala.

The same quality is apparent in the three episodes of *Roseland*, but it is lent to people who are much more conventional as characters than were those of the earlier pictures. There is the middle-aged widow who frequents Roseland to keep alive the memory of her deceased husband; another woman somewhat past her prime clings to a spineless luxury-loving gigolo who has no compunction about maintaining his relation with the woman while agreeing to live with a younger one. We also meet an aging but still vital European lady who seeks to prolong the euphoria of her gay past (in Vienna probably) till she dances herself

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to death. A character who acts as the link for the various film's segments is Cleo, a sadly wise Broadway dance teacher.

I understand Ivory's commiseration with the fundamental homelessness and lovelessness of these people in a world that has become bleak for them, but it was only with some effort that I could share in his sentiment.

The cast—Geraldine Chaplin, Helen Gallagher, Joan Copeland, David Thomas—is good, but only Lilia Skala as the eldest of the women has the kind of fullness of being, the histrionic authority and mature humor to add an extra dimension to the ordinariness of the film's device.

One might say that *The Lacemaker*, a Swiss/French film, is wholly sentimental. Like many French, German, Italian short stories, it tells the story of a shy, innocent girl of 18 (she is an apprentice in a beauty shop) who falls in love with a bright *bourgeois* university student, gives herself to him and then the incompatibility of their social and intellectual stations brings about their separation. Her life, in which there will be other lovers, is emotionally wrecked.

But the picture is saved by the delicacy and intelligence of its treatment by the Swiss director Claude Goretta and by Isabelle Huppert, a French actress whose sensibility in the role makes her even more affectingly beautiful than her features alone would lead us to affirm.

Every aspect of the film is expressive: the beach at the Normandy bathing resort as well as the various people introduced—the students, both the boy's and girl's parents, the girl's older companion—also disillusioned in love—and the sense of place throughout. When we are convinced by the "little things" in a film such as this, we accept and are touched by what we might otherwise reject as banal.

Best of all among the pictures I saw in this period is the Hungarian film *Women*, directed by Márta Mészáros whose previous films I have not seen. To think it the "best" came as something of a surprise to me! For a while I thought it more novelistic than cinematic—a possibly meaningless distinction—and I could not see its point, that is, to what artistic destination it was leading. But an apparent vagueness in the motivation of the main characters, I soon discovered, was due to the complexity of the material. The director's subtlety of statement, eschewing psychological oversimplification for the purpose of movie clarity, made all the difference.

Of the two women, the film's central figures, one is the manager of a workers' hostel in Budapest; the other has come to live there because she can no longer tolerate her husband's drunkenness and brutality when he is in that state. But she is physically bound to him and both are very much attached to their young daughter, who is sometimes put in a position of having to witness their sexual and brutal bouts.

The older woman (the hostel manager) is so preoccupied with her job that, though married to a good man with whom she has had several children, she can spare him and her household very little time. This causes strain and estrangement between them. Both women's marriages are unsatisfactory; both women are closer to each other than to their mates. Both in different ways are in the same boat.

The factual details—the alcoholism of one husband, the passion for his wife, the love for his daughter, his interest in the manager who befriends his wife, her sympathy for him because he is very much alive through the heat of his desire, while her own husband is rather cold—all these are made entirely clear, but very little in the web and conflict of emotions is tagged and labeled. The relationships, personal and social, perceived

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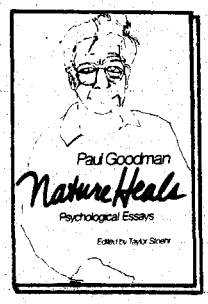

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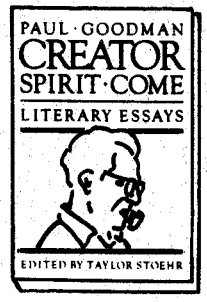

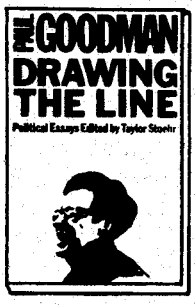

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in action rather than verbally commented on, are thus knotty, disturbing, real.

The picture's last moment is perhaps the most telling. The alcoholic's daughter, almost mute throughout, suddenly cries out when everything seems settled, "You lie! Everyone lies!" The outburst takes on a resonance beyond the situation which the child has silently observed. It extends not only to the rationalizations and solutions to which most of us accommodate ourselves but obliquely perhaps to the particular society in which the film's story unfolds. Life goes on here very much as everywhere else, but under Communist regimes even more is hidden by official doctrine and the directives of socialist realism!

One thing is certain: such a picture, with its unabashed admixture of eroticism, unblemished by prurience, could not be made in the Soviet Union. In this respect at any rate the USSR is the most retarded of Socialist nations.

Marina Vlady, the French actress, with her oddly enigmatic beauty is excellent as the manager—a combination of strong will and emotional vulnerability. Even more captivating is Lili Monori as the second woman, both soft and tough, a sensuous hoyden, with a kind of vulgar and enticing proletarian gumption. The two husbands are also well cast and played. Compared to this film, the subtleties of most of the others (Truffaut and his coevals) appear very thin.

In the meantime at the Imperial Theatre Victor Borge, who looks like a suave college professor, holds forth with utmost security and technical finesse, provoking unrestrained hilarity with his salutary nonsense. □

INDIGENOUS MUSIC/ Nat Hentoff

When I was a record producer some seventeen years ago, I often thought that the ideal place to record would be in a barn. Most commercial studios have the ambiance of a hospital operating room. But a barn—the space and spaciousness, the slowing down of time—might ease the performers so that the music could breathe naturally. I never pursued the notion, yielding to the geographical convenience of a too professional studio in the city.

In recent years, however, a most singular record company, Philo, has indeed set itself up in a barn in Vermont. Or more specifically, in the large loft of a barn where, since there are no parallel surfaces, the acoustics can breathe along with the music.

In addition to the warmth and clarity of sound, Philo's releases are distinctive in that the artist is in command of the proceedings. He or she selects the songs, the accompanying musicians, the producer, and even has a decisive say in how the album cover will look. Actually, that's the way I used to function, and it works. If you have sufficient confidence in a performer to hire him to record, you'll get much more substantial music if you act only as an adviser, letting the artist direct his own ad hoc destiny. After all, it's his by-line.

Philo specializes in folk, country and various other indigenous singers and players. I am particularly delighted that the label has made available again to American audiences the extraordinarily perceptive narrative singing of Jean Redpath. A native of Scotland, she has a rich, variegated repertory of British folk songs, as well as contemporary tales. Her voice is full but limber. It is also playful, grave, ominous, witty, sensual, and is sometimes so nakedly lyrical as to bring tears. Of her Philo sets, I would recommend *Jean Redpath* and *The Songs of Robert Burns, Volume One*. By the way, there will eventually be sixteen more albums in this Robert Burns series. Barns do help create long, unhurried agenda. (For a catalogue: Philo, The Barn, North Ferrisburg, Vt. 05473.)

As for home-grown talent, while Philo does well with such singers as Mary McCaslin, Jim Ringer and Utah Phillips, I am more interested in virtual unknowns like Joan Crane and Debby McClatchy who record for the label's subsidiary line, Fretless. (The Fretless performers are asked to pay nominal sums toward their recordings.) In *Dirt Pusher's Blues*, Joan Crane, a long-haired, open-faced young woman, reveals knowledgeable affection for such songsters as Blind Willie McTell, Mississippi John Hurt, and a pride of anonymous bards.

She does not, however, try to imitate their cadences and timbres, as if she had lived through the same experiences as they. Instead, with a marvelously clear, wholly unaffected sound and the rhythms of a sea gull, she keeps the spirit of these songs intact while somehow transforming them into her present tense. There is also a delightful tune about the kitchen end of a love affair—*My Eggs Don't Taste the Same Without You*.

It is precisely a singer like Joan Crane who might never have gotten on records had it not been for Philo/Fretless. Her style is in no way modish, though I think this album will bring pleasure for decades. Her repertory is mostly old, though newly pertinent; and her superb accompaniment has nary an instrument that can plug into a wall.

The same can be said of Debby McClatchy whose *Homemade Goodies* is also on Fretless. She too sings with an airy naturalness, and her repertory is that of a musical ecumenist with excellent, adventurous taste—from Jimmie Rodger's night-intoxicated *Mississippi Moon* to a 19th-century Irish ballad about the devilish way in which a rich landowner ended his daughter's love affair with the son of a starving tenant family.

McClatchy can be more dramatic and sardonic than Joan Crane, and she has fashioned a number of her own songs to highlight those qualities. They are generally admirable tunes, and I can't think of one that the usual commercial label would record. In addition, there is a high-spirited farewell to traditional marriage, *Best of Friends* ("I don't need a ceremony to know that we are wed/ I don't need a man reading words to share your home and bed.") On this track, as on the others, there is searing, sizzling fiddle-playing by Alan Kaufman who ought to have his own album.

What makes this barnlike freedom possible is that Philo's break-even point, on the average, is a sale of 3,000 to 5,000 albums. A commercial company can't break even for less than sales of 40,000 to 60,000 on each album. Less can be more. □

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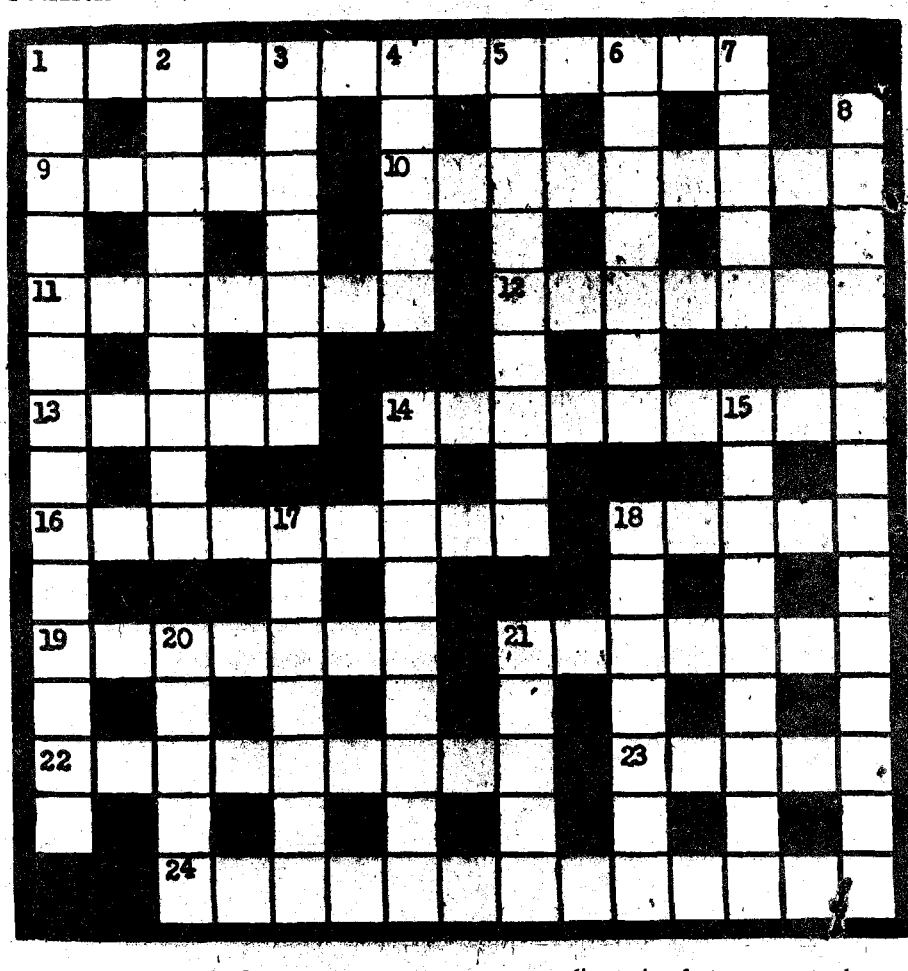

ACROSS

1 Honest, would an ultra-conventional blonde be like this? (4,3,6)
9 An English city goes first, one hears. (5)
10 What they once called the son of a Tsar. (5,4)
11 Broken rest is a sort of what many writers are responsible for. (7)
12 You might find something to dope you up in such pads. (7)
13 Euclid might be considered non-U to be a sort of hero to some people. (2,3)
14 Not a person who rents out music, though one might correspond with it. (3,6)
16 Organ in the act of being freed. (9)
18 Pieces to belt back, possibly. (5)
19 One gets extremely heated up when given one. (3-4)
21 Possibly in Canada, otherwise in 21 down. (7)
22 It wasn't necessarily more difficult to give it to Sleepy or Dopey. (9)
23 By the sound of it, all tied up with confidence. (5)
24 Only a few workers get bodily support, and stick with it. (8,6)

DOWN

1 Such direction could never be stern, leading to rapid advancement. (4,5,5)
2 and 20 They must be sisters or brothers. (9,5)
3 Certain to be in what might be sad surroundings—in fact, guaranteed to be so. (7)
4 Painter of the French essence to the French. (5)
5 Certain types were drawn before they were this and given room. (9)
6 Such things are bound to be within earshot. (7)
7 Possibly the study of music. (5)
8 Makes someone pointedly aware this way, and perhaps provides a lift. (4,1,4,3,2)
14 Not the pilot's walk-out—though militant types might call for it. (3,6)
15 Used to be considered responsible for some crazy dance. (9)
17 Alive to change, and break through, perhaps. (7)
18 What one does, if one does, is appropriate when it comes to literature and art. (7)
20 See 2 down
21 Silver was what his friend got away with! (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1697

ACROSS: 1 Surface tension; 8 High official; 10 Out on a limb; 11 Mean; 13 Buffet; 14 Turncoat; 16 Ignition; 17 Little; 19 Dart; 20 Square meal; 22 Freight train; 23 Bathroom scales. DOWN: 1 School building; 2 Right of entry; 3 Adornments; 4 Enfold; 5 Encomium; 6 Slap; 7 The Netherlands; 9 Get on the ball; 12 Antiseptic; 15 Mosquito; 18 Mayhem; 21 Arch.

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